



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 10, 2022

Ms. ML Calcote
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Department of Public Safety
P.O. Box 4087
Austin, Texas 78773-0001

OR2022-13313

Dear Ms. Calcote:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 946812 (PIR 22-0312).

The Texas Department of Public Safety (the "department") received a request for records pertaining to the SPURS Training Manual Confidential Informant Management System ("CIMS").¹ You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.108, and 552.139 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure the internal records and notations of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors when their release would interfere with law enforcement and crime prevention. *Id.* § 552.108(b)(1); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 531 at 2 (1989) (quoting *Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977)). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(b)(1) must explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.108(b)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706. Section 552.108(b)(1) is intended to protect "information which, if released, would permit

¹ You state the department sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222 (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

private citizens to anticipate weaknesses in a police department, avoid detection, jeopardize officer safety, and generally undermine police efforts to effectuate the laws of this State.” *See City of Fort Worth v. Cornyn*, 86 S.W.3d 320, 327 (Tex. App.—Austin 2002, no pet.). This office has concluded section 552.108(b)(1) excepts from public disclosure information relating to the security or operation of a law enforcement agency. *See, e.g.*, Open Records Decision Nos. 531 (release of detailed use of force guidelines would unduly interfere with law enforcement), 252 (1980) (section 552.108 of the Government Code is designed to protect investigative techniques and procedures used in law enforcement), 143 (1976) (disclosure of specific operations or specialized equipment directly related to investigation or detection of crime may be excepted). Section 552.108(b)(1) is not applicable, however, to generally known policies and procedures. *See, e.g.*, ORDs 531 at 2-3 (Penal Code provisions, common law rules, and constitutional limitations on use of force not protected), 252 at 3 (governmental body failed to indicate why investigative procedures and techniques requested were any different from those commonly known).

You state the submitted information relates to specific operational instructions regarding the department’s use of CIMS. You explain the system is used to record law enforcement sensitive information related to confidential informants. You state release of the information at issue would reveal law enforcement techniques and procedures followed to store and search information regarding confidential informants. In addition, you argue release of the information at issue would interfere with law enforcement by providing bad actors with invaluable information concerning the department’s operations and efforts to protect sensitive confidential informant information. Based on these representations and our review, we agree the release of the submitted information would interfere with law enforcement. Accordingly, the department may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code.²

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

Michelle Garza
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MRG/jm

² As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of the submitted information.

Ms. ML Calcote - Page 3

Ref: ID# 946812

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)