



October 16, 2000

Ms. Julie B. Tebbets  
Ayers & Ayers  
Attorneys and Counselors  
2460 One Main Place  
1201 Main Street  
Dallas, Texas 75202

OR2000-4017

Dear Ms. Tebbets:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 140692.

The City of Balch Springs (the "city") received a request for the mug shot of a specific person and the 9-1-1 tapes for a particular accident. You state that you have released the mug shot and all the requested 9-1-1 tapes except for the one you have submitted to this office for a ruling. You claim that the submitted 9-1-1 tape is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101, 552.107, and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted audio tape.

Section 552.108 of the Government Code states that information held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime is excepted from required public disclosure "if release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime." Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). You inform us that the requested information pertains to an ongoing investigation. We therefore believe that the release of the information "would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime." *Id.* Thus the city may withhold the submitted 9-1-1 tape pursuant to section 552.108(a)(1).

Because we are able to make a determination under Section 552.108(a)(1), we need not discuss your other claimed exceptions. This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the

governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at 877/673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.--Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to the General Services Commission at 512/475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,



Noelle C. Letteri  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

NCL/cwt

Ref: ID#140692

Encl. Submitted documents

cc: Ms. Dorothy White  
WB33 News  
8001 John Carpenter Fwy  
Dallas, Texas 75247  
(w/o enclosures)