



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

January 20, 2011

Ms. Jennifer C. Cohen
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Department of Public Safety
P.O. Box 4087
Austin, Texas 78765-4087

OR2011-00975

Dear Ms. Cohen:

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# 406464 (ORA Nos. 10-2510 & 10-2782).

The Texas Department of Public Safety (the "department") received requests from two different requestors for all bid proposals, excluding the requestors' respective companies' proposals, submitted in response to RFO #405-11-00690. The second requestor also seeks all score sheets pertaining to the same RFO. Although you indicate the department takes no position with respect to the public availability of the submitted proposal information, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of several interested third parties. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, the department notified Informa Systems, Inc.; Manan, LLC d/b/a Gyrus Systems; Meridian Knowledge Solutions, LLC ("Meridian"); Saba Software, Inc.; and Solutions Thru Software, Inc. of the request and of each company's right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (determining statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain the applicability of exception to disclose under Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note you have not submitted any information responsive to the request for score sheets. To the extent information responsive to this portion of the second requestor's request existed on the date the department received the request, we assume you have released it. If you have not released any such information, you must do so at this time. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301(a), .302; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes that no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible).

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from any of the notified third parties explaining why their submitted proposal information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude any of the third parties have protected proprietary interests in their information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Consequently, the department may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interests the notified third parties may have in the information.

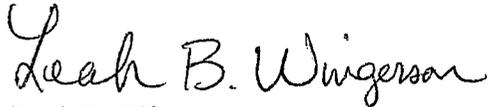
We note Meridian's submitted information may be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. Accordingly, the submitted information must be released, but any of Meridian's information protected by copyright must be released in accordance with copyright law.

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 http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public

information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Leah B. Wingerson
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

LBW/dls

Ref: ID# 406464

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestors
(w/o enclosures)

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