

Accused cop 'gave address of DV victim'

SHERELE MOODY

A POLICE officer is under investigation for allegedly giving the address of a high-risk domestic violence victim to the man accused of raping, choking, torturing and beating her.

It's the third time in 10 months that a Queensland public servant has been accused of handing out a victim's location to a person accused of domestic violence offences.

In the latest case, the mother went into hiding after finding out in April that the officer sent her former husband her address on an official Queensland Police Service document.

The state's ethical standards branch is investigating the latest alleged breach of privacy that domestic violence experts labelled "outrageous" and "deadly".

The distraught victim revealed to *The Courier-Mail* how police offered to put her in witness protection and they

are investigating how her car came to be stolen and torched and her home broken into about the time her address was released.

She called on Commissioner Ian Stewart to stand down the officer at the centre of the controversy until the investigation was complete.

She also urged Mr Stewart, Police Minister Mark Ryan and Domestic Violence Minister Shannon Fentiman to fix the "flawed system before it leads to an innocent woman being murdered".

"Nobody close to me, even my family, knew my address and yet the people who were supposed to be looking after my safety were the very people who provided the one piece of information my abuser should never have had."

A police media spokesman said the issue was being investigated and it would therefore be "inappropriate to provide further comment".

Mr Ryan said he expected all police to "act with integrity and accountability" when dealing with such cases.

Opposition Domestic and Family Violence spokeswoman Ros Bates said domestic violence survivors had no "confidence" in a system that sent their details to their attackers.

Women's Legal Service Queensland chief executive Angela Lynch said police officers needed to realise domestic violence abusers were "manipulative" and would try anything to get information on their victims. "It really is simply outrageous that the police have not as a matter of protocol checked the history of this fellow," Ms Lynch said.

Criminologist Dr Silke Meyer said the system needed fixing. "It is appalling that we continue to jeopardise victims and children's safety because organisations have operating systems that aren't up to standard," she said.