

[REDACTED]

From: Erin Scrimshaw [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 16 August 2021 10:04 PM
To: Stalking (DJCS)
Subject: VLRC - stalking submission

To whom it may concern,

Celeste manno was a very close friend of mine. I spoke to her daily, spent a minimum of 5 days a week with her and saw first hand, the experiences of stalking she endured.

This, along with the fact that I have also experienced stalking, makes me almost an expert on the subject.

Unfortunately Stalking has a stigma. generally the first thought when hearing the word, stalking, is that you are being dramatic. But here we are trying to better the laws around this exact matter, [REDACTED].

The matter of stalking is not taken seriously enough, and education needs to be started in order to help break this stigma, and promote more people reporting stalkers.

I strongly believe that the reason why the public are so scared or find reporting their stalking experiences daunting, is due to the lack of respect and understanding from Victoria police. This is something that needs to be focused on, along with education and more mental health training within the police force.

Another key component to why stalking events are not being reported is due to the lack of protection given after the report has been made.

this may be due to the police not taking the report seriously, or that protection orders are in fact, not protecting the victims.

Considering the protection orders can be breached with almost no repercussions shows how much they actually prevent stalking from happening. Breaching a protection order needs to be taken more seriously, with actions taken immediately such as being in remand until a judge can rule on the outcome of the breach.

I believe that if there were stricter laws then maybe we won't need to worry about this happening [REDACTED] because it should never happen. Ankle monitors, gps tracking, and any other type of tracking which can alert the victim that their stalker is close by, has the potential to save lives. It is up to us, as humans to protect those we love and care about [REDACTED].

Mental health assessments for those who have been accused of stalking, within the first 5 days of a report to the police, need to be done. This will have the opportunity to prevent anything further occurring if it is found they are at risk of hurting someone else, or are suffering from severe mental health issues.

Case workers who are assigned to victims of stalking - members of Victoria police who are not necessarily from the local police station, who follow up and stay in contact with the victims throughout the process of getting an IVO ect. To provide support, advice and easy access to escalating further reports.

Stalking hotline for victims to call and speak with police officers who are educated and understand the seriousness of stalking - and for those who can report suss activities or anonymous reports of known stalkers (friends/family who know a stalker is continuing their actions).

These are just a few of the many ideas that will hopefully be considered. Thank-you for taking the time to read this, and thank-you for helping pave the way to stricter laws for stalking, and the potential to save lives!

Erin scrimshaw
#hernamewascelestemanno