

Muslim woman who wouldn't stand for judge charged



From the [Moutia Elzahed, who is one of two "wives" of Hamdi Alqudsi](#), was today handed a Court Attendance Notice to answer nine charges of disrespectful behaviour in court for refusing to stand for District Court Judge Audrey Balla during a civil court hearing last year. Each charge carries a maximum penalty of 14 days in prison and a \$1100 fine.

The Crown Solicitor alleges that Elzahed refused to stand on nine occasions when Judge Balla entered or left the courtroom during a court hearing between November 28 and December 7 last year.

She does not, however, face any charge in relation to her refusal to remove her veil to give evidence, which caused controversy during the hearing. Judge Balla was hearing a lawsuit brought by Elzahed against the NSW and Federal police claiming she was assaulted during a counter-terrorism raid on her home in September 2014.

During that trial, Elzahed refused to stand for Judge Balla, with her barrister telling the court "she won't stand for anyone except Allah". Elzahed also refused to take off her face veil, a niqab, to give evidence unless all the men in the

courtroom looked away.

Elzahed has been ordered to appear in court on June 15.