

5 Downing Centre Court Cases to Watch in 2016

There's always something interesting happening behind the walls of the Downing Centre Court complex in the Sydney CBD.

Here are 5 interesting cases to look-out for in 2016.

1. Selim Mehajer Faces Voter Fraud Charges

Deputy Mayor of Auburn, Selim Mehajer, hit the papers in 2015 for his extravagant and controversial wedding, which saw an entire street closed down for the occasion, resulting in traffic chaos.

After his wedding date, Mehajer was once again in the media spotlight, this time facing allegations of forging ballot papers back in 2012. Mehajer, along with seven others, are facing charges of voter fraud, which carries a maximum penalty of ten years imprisonment.

Mehajer [adamantly denies the charges](#), saying it is "all a political game... full of hidden agendas to make me step down". Together with his seven associates, Mehajer is set to face the Downing Centre in February.

2. Man Accused of Spreading HIV

Telling a partner that you've contracted an STI isn't the easiest conversation to have – but it [is against the law to knowingly withhold this information and then have sex with another person](#).

Last year, a [28-year-old man](#) who passed HIV to his partner was stopped at the airport by Australian Federal Police. He has since been charged with recklessly infecting grievous bodily harm, and is due to face Downing Centre Local Court in coming weeks.

3. UK Diamond Thief

A jewellery store in Sydney's iconic Queen Victoria Building was the location of choice for diamond lover, UK citizen Matthew Osborne, who is alleged to have stolen a \$145,000 diamond from the store in 2013.

[Mr Osborne was recently extradited from Queensland](#) – where he was convicted of stealing a rare pink diamond worth \$250,000, although the ring has never been found since.

Osborne's latest case will be heard in Downing Centre Court later this year.

4. Partner of Man Haron Monis on Trial for Murder

Before the Sydney Siege took place, Mr Monis and his partner Amira Droudis were already facing extremely serious charges – including the murder of Monis' former wife, who was stabbed a total of 18 times before being set on fire in the stairwell of her Sydney home.

Late last year, Ms Droudis pleaded not guilty to the charges, and will be facing trial later this year. [The Crown reportedly alleges](#) that while Monis was the mastermind behind the plan, Ms Droudis carried out the murder.

An application for a judge-only trial was successful, meaning that no jury will decide the guilt or innocence of Ms Droudis. The trial is expected to take place in mid-2016.

5. 91-year-old Drug Mule

A 91-year-old Sydney man was [charged with drug importation after returning to Australia with 4.5kg of cocaine hidden in his luggage](#).

The retired oral surgeon is one of the oldest alleged drug mules in the world. He declared his innocence to the media—saying he was unaware that the soap he carried for someone

else contained \$1 million worth of drugs.

The case will continue through the [courts at Downing Centre](#) in 2016.