

Jewish body takes Islamic preacher to court over antisemitic speeches

From the [Sydney Morning Herald](#) and the [Northern Daily Leader](#)

Australia's peak Jewish body has launched legal action against an Islamic preacher and his religious centre over what it claims were antisemitic "derogatory generalisations" about Jewish people.



The Executive Council of Australian Jewry has launched legal action against Islamic preacher Wissam Haddad.

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry on Friday filed Federal Court proceedings against Wissam Haddad, also known as Abu Ousayd, alleging the podcaster contravened

the Racial Discrimination Act during speeches made at the Al Madina Dawah Centre in Bankstown last year.

The council alleges Haddad referred to the Jewish community as a "vile" and "treacherous" people during remarks it claims were uploaded online.

Council co-chief executive Peter Wertheim and deputy president Robert Goot, who brought the proceedings under the section of the act prohibiting offensive behaviour based on racial

hatred, have sought an injunction from the court ordering the online speeches be removed.

Wertheim and Goot have asked for an injunction banning Haddad and his centre from publishing similar content online in the future and for the court to order publication of a “corrective notice” on the centre’s social media pages. It has applied for the cost of its legal action to be covered, but it has not sought damages or compensation.

Haddad, who refers to himself as Abu Ousayd on his social media accounts, hosts the *Muslim Unapologetic* podcast and has posted anti-Israeli content to his Instagram account. Wissam was contacted for comment.

Mr Wertheim said Australia’s multicultural success story meant people were free to observe their faiths in harmony and respect.

“That should mean we do not bring the hatreds, prejudices and bigotry of overseas conflicts and societies into Australia,” he said. While maintaining social cohesion was the role of governments and their agencies, they had failed the Jewish community, Mr Wertheim said.

“It should not fall on our community, or any other community, to take private legal action to remedy a public wrong, and to stand up to those who sow hatred in our midst ... However, in the circumstances we feel we have no alternative.”