



POLICE MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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New DNA board hits the ground running

The new DNA board, under the direction of Justice Yvonne Mokgoro has hit the ground running and has agreed to, as a matter of urgency, conduct a field trip to the South African Police Service National Forensics Science Laboratory within the next four weeks amongst other tasks.

One of the primary tasks of the board is to provide oversight over the processes relating to the collection, retention, storage, destruction, and disposal of forensic DNA samples; the retention and removal of forensic DNA profiles, and familial searches; any breach in respect of taking, transporting, analysis, storing, use and communication of forensic DNA samples and forensic DNA profiles, including security breaches; and security and quality management systems;

In its inaugural meeting on Monday March 2 under the auspices of the Police Ministry facilitated by the Civilian Secretariat for Police, the board also agreed to:

- Facilitate the finalisation of draft regulations to the Act
- Develop a strategic plan for the execution of its functions. The plan will be informed by the SAPS implementation plan on the Act as well as an independent audit on the current environment, including a gaps analysis, and
- Commence processes to establish an administrative secretariat;

Known as the DNA board, the National Forensic Oversight and Ethics Board, was established in terms of s15V of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Act 37 of 2013 and its other functions are to:

- Receive and assess complaints about alleged violations relating to the abuse of DNA samples and forensic DNA profiles and/ or security breaches, and reporting of complaints in respect thereto
- Make proposals on the improvement of practices regarding the overall operations of the National Forensic DNA Database (NFDD); the ethical, legal and social implications of the use of forensic DNA profiles; and on the training and the development of criteria for the use of familial searches; and
- Monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Act

At the Monday meeting, the board also established task teams to:

- Develop rules and procedures that will inform the governance of the Board;
- Determine which reports will be required by the entities affected by the Act and the processes and timeframes related thereto;
- Review tasks arising from the Act that require immediate implementation; and
- Develop a communication and outreach strategy to enhance accessibility of the Board to the public, particularly in relation to complaints.

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