

## News Release

<b>Date</b>	5 February 2014
<b>Subject</b>	After a Decade of Intense Lobbying The DNA Act Finally Becomes Law

The DNA Project is celebrating a significant milestone with the passing of the DNA Act into law on 27 January 2014.

The DNA Project was involved in the preparation of the final draft of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill B09-2013 (known as the DNA Bill) and has been instrumental in lobbying parliament to promulgate the legislation which will have a profound impact on the criminal justice system in South Africa. It will enable proper use of DNA analysis and a national DNA database to help identify and convict repeat offenders.

Founded by Vanessa Lynch in 2005 and one of the first projects to receive support from the Mike Thomson Change a Life Trust, the DNA Project has also been paving the way for the implementation of the legislation. Vanessa and her team understand how important it is to ensure that DNA evidence left at crime scenes is preserved and collected and they have worked hard to promote DNA awareness through a range of interventions, including awareness training, training of trainers and evocative public awareness campaigns.

Responding to news of the promulgation of the DNA Act, a delighted Lynch said: "The impact of this news is groundbreaking and we are on the brink of changing the way in which we fight crime in South Africa and hold criminals accountable for their actions.

"Thank you to the Mike Thomson Change a Life Trust which has played such a significant role in fighting for this important law to be passed. It is a collective victory and we must continue to fight to ensure that it is effectively implemented."

To date, the DNA Project has trained over 27 000 first on crime responders in eight provinces throughout the country. These workshops, given at security companies, paramedic training facilities, community policing forums, schools, community centres, rape crisis centres and now at SAPS stations, have successfully been spreading the critical message: Never Disturb a Crime Scene, DNA can convict. The awareness campaign has also been extended to prosecutors representing the NPA and magistrates to facilitate the effective use of DNA evidence in criminal cases. Last year, the DNA Project launched Operation: DNA CSI on its website to broaden the reach of its awareness campaign even further.

For additional information, please visit the DNA Project website at [www.dnaproject.co.za](http://www.dnaproject.co.za)