"When I heard about the book, I was impressed. But after I read the book, I was over-impressed." These were the words used by well-known State prosecutor, Adv Gerrie Nel, during the launch of *Forensic Investigation: Legislative principles and investigative practice*, on 11 September 2015.

There is no doubt that forensic investigations have seen huge developments since the 90s, and that it has enhanced the ability of conventional police investigations to lead to more successful prosecutions. Unfortunately, despite the possibilities with regard to how forensics can assist with criminal investigations, it is no secret that police members have been responsible for disturbing crime scenes on many occasions, which has impacted negatively on the image of the SAPS and the outcome of the forensic investigation, and even led to the acquittal of the accused.

In his address, Adv Nel said: "We expect insight from detectives, we expect investigators to know everything on the scene, which prosecutors think about for months, when the crime scene is no longer available." This book is a training tool and a resource. It is not only about what should be done, but also how it should be done.

One of the editors, Prof Rudolph Zinn from the Department of Police Practice at Unisa, said that this book is for the investigator per se, which includes private and police investigators. It is not only about how the process should be done, but also about what you can expect and the ethical processes involved with investigations. This book will help investigators in terms of what tools are needed.

**The book**

The aim of this book is to meet the needs of those working in this field by examining how forensic investigations should be conducted in South Africa, with reference to local legislative principles and scientific processes. It starts off by covering aspects such as the constitutional basis for public and private policing, the investigative process and the characteristics of a good investigator. It does not only touch on the basic principles of an investigation, but moves on to examine more sophisticated specialised aspects such as medico-legal evidence, DNA and cyber investigations. However, the contents focus not only on traditional investigative fields, but also on the analysis of offender behaviour and the choices they make during the commission of crime. These aspects are dealt with in relation to forensic geography and offender profiling.

This book takes the reader on an informative journey - from the crime scene to the courtroom, from the investigation to the prosecution. The contents are applicable to investigators, detectives, prosecutors at the NPA, private investigators and anyone with an interest in forensics. The book is edited by the well-known Prof Rudolph Zinn, a former policeman, together with Dr Sethomamamu Dintwe. In addition, specialists such as Prof (Brig) Gerard Labuschagne, the head of the SAPS’s Investigative Psychology Section, have contributed to the contents, which include the following sections:

- Principles of investigation (T Budhram and J van Graan);
- Serological evidence and DNA analysis (M S Manamela; J H Smith and R J Mokwena);
- Digital forensics and cybercrime (J Jordaan);
- Criminal investigative analysis (G Labuschagne);
- Examples of section 212 statements - drugs and ballistics; and
- Examples of the structure of a statement and what a detailed statement with annexures should look like.

**ORDERS**

If you are interested in obtaining your own copy of this book, contact Juta by sending an e-mail to: orders@juta.co.za; fax: (021) 659 2360 or contact them at tel: (011) 217 7200.