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Stolen banknote DNA link to thieves



New AIDC technology which involves unique DNA codes to mark items has been used for the first time to help prosecute and ultimately convict offenders in a UK banknote robbery case.

Applied DNA Sciences Inc - from its new Yorkshire Authentication Laboratory - successfully authenticated SigNature DNA on stolen bank notes received from the UK Police, assisting them in the prosecution of the alleged robbers.

The bank notes recovered and submitted to APDN for forensic authentication, appeared to have been washed multiple times by the criminals using harsh chemicals, in an attempt to remove the dye that stained the cash during the robbery.

SigNature DNA resisted removal and was still readily detectable using APDN's proprietary methods. APDN says it can supply an unlimited number of unique DNA codes enabling the unequivocal authentication of bank notes and other marked items. The same DNA markers detected on the recovered bank notes were also detected on personal items belonging to the suspects in the investigation.

Dr. James Hayward, CEO of APDN, who has been in talks with UK law enforcement groups to demonstrate the SigNature DNA authentication process, said: "DNA provides a forensic trail of evidence linking the criminal to the crime, and DNA authentication supports the enforcement programs of the various law enforcement groups."

Loomis UK, a cash-handling company that moves over £150 billion in cash annually, uses APDN's SigNature DNA to protect its cash boxes. SigNature DNA is automatically sprayed onto the enclosed currency along with an intense dye whenever a Loomis Cash Box is disturbed. Any tampering with the cash-in-transit boxes will result in both the money and offenders being contaminated. SigNature DNA can forensically link an offender with an individual crime scene, meaning they cannot deny their involvement.

Tony Benson, Risk Director, Loomis UK said: This is the first time SigNature DNA evidence has been presented to help prosecute and ultimately convict offenders in the UK. We hope this evidence will serve as a warning to other potential criminals that they will be successfully prosecuted if SigNature DNA is found on them.

"As the conviction rate for offences involving SigNature DNA becomes known, the message for would-be robbers will become increasingly clear: if you commit these offenses you will be caught, prosecuted and sent to prison."