

South Africa's Draft National AI Policy — Withdrawn After AI-Hallucinated Citations Exposed a Drafting Scandal

AI in the Public Sector · Good practice · South Africa

Quality score: 20/100

Evidence strength: Descriptive / self-reported

Summary

South Africa published its draft National AI Policy for public comment on 10 April 2026, then withdrew it 16 days later after journalists found at least 6 of 67 citations were AI-hallucinated fake or misattributed studies.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured public value	0/3
Transparency, fairness & accountability	1/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	1/3
Scalability beyond pilot	0/3
Governance, capability & sustainability	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-08-08

[Department of Communications and Digital Technologies \(South Africa\)](#) — accessed 2026-08-08

[The Conversation: lessons from South Africa's AI policy citation scandal](#) — accessed 2026-08-08

[DLA Piper: The Withdrawal of South Africa's Draft AI Policy](#) — accessed 2026-08-08

[CNBC Africa: South Africa pulls AI policy after hallucinated citations](#) — accessed 2026-08-08

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