



Provide a prioritized checklist of AI governance controls for ministries

Below is a prioritized checklist of **AI governance controls** tailored for Mauritius government ministries, fully aligned with national law, SADC and AU regional standards, and current best practices.^[1] ^[2] ^[3] ^[4]

AI Governance Controls Checklist for Ministries

1. Legal and Ethical Foundations

- Ensure all AI activities comply with the Data Protection Act 2017 and SADC Model Law principles (lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation).^[2] ^[3]
- Integrate sectoral guidelines from the Financial Services Commission and Higher Education Commission, including rules for AI-enabled decision-making and education.^[1]

2. Oversight and Structural Controls

- Establish an AI Ethics and Compliance Committee within each ministry responsible for AI risk oversight, policy development, and compliance auditing.^[1]
- Appoint an AI and Data Protection Officer (DPO) to oversee privacy, data protection, and incident response.

3. Governance and Accountability

- Maintain a comprehensive AI systems inventory (description, use cases, risk ratings, and owners).
- Document data sources, model development processes, and decision logic for all AI systems.
- Assign clear lines of responsibility and escalation for AI failures or ethical breaches.

4. Risk Assessment and Impact Analysis

- Conduct Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) before deployment or significant updates of AI systems.
- Assess algorithmic risks, including bias, transparency, explainability, and systemic impact.
- Establish review checkpoints for high-risk applications (e.g., social services, public safety, financial aid).

5. Transparency and Human Oversight

- Ensure all automated decisions impacting individuals are explainable on demand.
- Maintain human-in-the-loop processes for all high-impact or rights-affecting decisions.^{[3] [4]}
- Communicate AI usage practices and rights (opt-out, review) to citizens transparently.

6. Security and Data Protection

- Adopt strong access controls, audit trails, and security monitoring for data and models.
- Apply data minimization, anonymization, and retention rules from the DPA and SADC Model Law.^{[2] [3]}
- Monitor compliance with cross-border transfer rules for any international data exchange.

7. Bias Mitigation and Continuous Improvement

- Monitor and report on fairness, bias, and disparate impact in AI outcomes—especially for protected groups.
- Implement continuous model validation and regular independent audits of system performance and ethical risks.

8. Training and Capacity Building

- Provide periodic training for ministry staff on AI, ethics, compliance, and data protection responsibilities.
- Review and update governance practices in light of new legal, technical, or sectoral developments.

9. Stakeholder Engagement and Reporting

- Conduct stakeholder consultations for new high-impact AI initiatives and publicize major use cases.
- Issue annual accountability and transparency reports on ministry AI use and governance controls.

These prioritized controls provide a practical, compliant, and ethical blueprint for AI governance within Mauritius ministries, ensuring alignment with both national and regional standards.^{[4] [3] [2]}
^[1]

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1. The-Race-for-AI-Leadership_MF_Article.pdf
2. <https://www.dlapiperdataprotection.com/?t=law&c=MU>
3. <https://www.mediadefence.org/ereader/publications/introductory-modules-on-digital-rights-and-freedom-of-expression-online/module-4-data-privacy-and-data-protection/data-protection/>
4. <https://www.trust.org/toolkit/part-2-emerging-ai-governance-in-africa/governance-in-southern-africa/>

