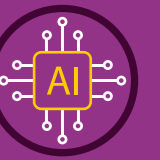
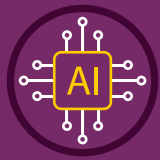


HITRANS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE POLICY



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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes the principles and guidance for the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS). Its purpose is to ensure AI is used to enhance productivity, creativity, innovation, and decision-making while maintaining compliance with legal, ethical, and data protection standards. The policy supports the objectives set out in HITRANS' Strategic Plan to deliver smarter, fairer, and more sustainable transport solutions through the adoption of modern digital tools.

This policy applies to all HITRANS employees, contractors, consultants, and partner organisations working on HITRANS projects who use AI systems or outputs in any capacity.

2. Definition of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as text generation, data analysis, prediction, translation, image generation, or decision support. This includes, but is not limited to: Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Fireflies.ai, Gemini, Copilot); machine learning models and data analysis systems; and AI-powered productivity or content tools embedded in Microsoft 365, Adobe, or similar platforms.

3. Principles of Responsible AI Use

This policy aligns with Scotland's Artificial Intelligence Strategy: Trustworthy, Ethical and Inclusive (Scottish Government, 2021; updated 2022). HITRANS adopts the Strategy's core values – trustworthiness, fairness, transparency, accountability, sustainability, and respect for human rights – as foundations for all AI use across the organisation.

- Ethical Use: AI must align with HITRANS' values of fairness, transparency, and accountability. Outputs must be free from bias, discrimination, or misinformation.
- Human Oversight: AI is designed to assist, not replace, human judgment. Staff remain responsible for the accuracy and appropriateness of all work produced with AI support.

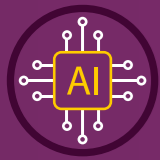
- Transparency: When AI tools contribute to reports, communications, or publications, this use should be acknowledged appropriately, and outputs reviewed by a human before dissemination.
- Privacy and Data Protection: Personal or confidential information must not be entered into AI tools unless secure and approved. All use must comply with UK GDPR and the HITRANS Data Protection Policy.
- Accuracy and Verification: AI-generated content should be fact-checked and validated. Decisions should not rely solely on AI outputs without supporting evidence.

4. Benefits and Opportunities of AI for HITRANS

Artificial Intelligence offers substantial potential to support HITRANS' mission by improving the efficiency, quality, and reach of its work. When used responsibly, AI can:

- Increase efficiency by automating repetitive tasks such as minute-taking, transcription, and document summarisation.
- Improve evidence-based decision-making by analysing large datasets, such as travel patterns or emissions data.
- Enhance communication by supporting the drafting of reports, consultation materials, and accessible web content.
- Facilitate collaboration through tools like Fireflies.ai that summarise meetings and ensure follow-up on key actions.
- Support innovation and scenario planning in areas such as sustainable transport, accessibility, and service optimisation.
- Aid data interpretation and visualisation, helping to communicate complex analyses to stakeholders and decision-makers.

These benefits help HITRANS strengthen its capacity to deliver regional transport improvements and demonstrate leadership in the responsible adoption of new technologies.



5. Examples of AI Applications in HITRANS Work

- Supporting policy and strategy development by summarising research or identifying best practice from public documents.
- Analysing stakeholder or consultation responses for recurring themes and insights.
- Processing open data (e.g. timetables, ticketing data, journey times) to identify service improvements.
- Using transcription tools such as Fireflies.ai to capture meeting records and improve follow-up efficiency.
- Supporting the preparation of communication materials and accessibility improvements for public consultations.
- Analysing carbon emissions data or transport performance indicators for sustainability monitoring.

These examples illustrate potential uses; all new AI applications should be risk-assessed and approved by the Partnership Director to ensure compliance with this policy.

6. Acceptable Uses of AI

Acceptable uses include drafting documents, summarising datasets, improving writing clarity, automating routine tasks, and supporting meeting transcription or data visualisation. AI should be used to enhance productivity and innovation but must not replace human expertise, stakeholder engagement, or professional judgment.

7. Prohibited Uses of AI

Prohibited uses include entering confidential data into unsecured systems, generating discriminatory or misleading content, relying solely on AI for policy or personnel decisions, and using AI to create deepfakes, misinformation, or unauthorised logos. Any use that breaches copyright, intellectual property, or data protection laws is also strictly prohibited.

8. Training, Support and Capacity Building

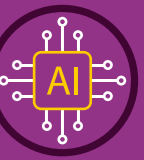
All AI training and awareness activities will reference the Scottish AI Playbook (Scottish AI Alliance), which provides practical guidance, toolkits and checklists to support trustworthy, ethical and inclusive AI deployment across the Scottish public sector.

HITRANS will offer guidance and awareness sessions to promote confident and ethical use of AI. This includes staff induction materials, examples of approved AI tools, and shared learning across the organisation. Partnerships with other Regional Transport Partnerships and public bodies exploring AI applications will be encouraged.

9. Governance, Review and Accountability

Registration and Transparency: HITRANS will register any AI systems it uses or develops in the Scottish AI Register to support transparency and accountability. Entries will be reviewed annually within HITRANS' information governance processes.

Oversight of this policy lies with the Partnership Director. The AI Use Policy will be reviewed annually or when legislative or technological developments require updates. All staff are responsible for adhering to this policy and reporting any concerns about inappropriate AI use.

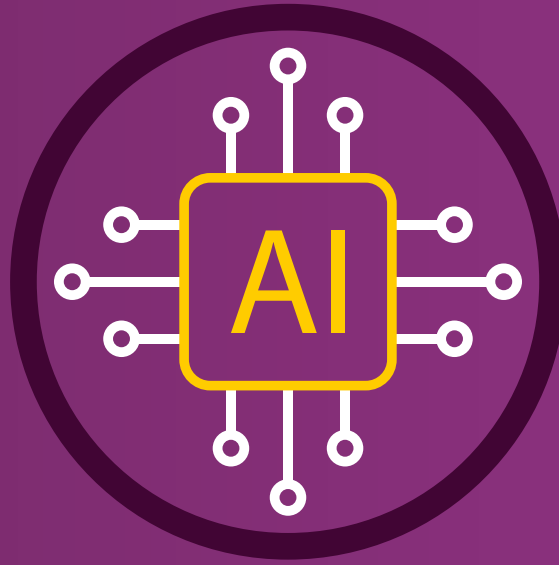


10. Related Policies and Framework Documents

Policy / Document	Date of Publication	Document Type / Category	Relevance to AI Policy
Information Management Policy	16 May 2025	Policy / Information	Ensures secure management of information and data used with AI tools.
Records Management Policy	16 May 2025	Policy / Records	Defines retention and archiving standards for AI-generated outputs.
Privacy Notice	5 May 2025	Policy / Statement	Sets out how personal data is managed in compliance with GDPR.
Complaints Policy	12 May 2025	Policy / Complaints	Provides procedures for addressing complaints related to AI use.
Corporate Hospitality Policy	9 May 2025	Policy / Statement	Promotes transparency in external relationships and AI procurement.
HITRANS Anti-Bribery Policy	25 April 2025	Policy / Anti-Bribery	Ensures ethical standards in all AI-related partnerships.
HITRANS Anti-Bribery Procedure	25 April 2025	Procedure / Anti-Bribery	Provides safeguards against corruption or bias in AI use.
HITRANS Marketing and Communications Strategy	17 October 2025	Strategy / Marketing	Guides responsible use of AI in communication and branding.
HITRANS Equalities Scheme 2025–2029	17 October 2025	Scheme / Equality	Ensures AI promotes equality and avoids discrimination.
HITRANS Staff Handbook	8 October 2025	Scheme / Delegation	Outlines responsibilities and acceptable use standards complementing this AI Policy.

11. Further Guidance

For advice on appropriate AI use, staff should contact the Partnership Director or the Data Protection Officer (DPO). This policy should be reviewed annually to remain aligned with the HITRANS governance framework and Policy Tracker.



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