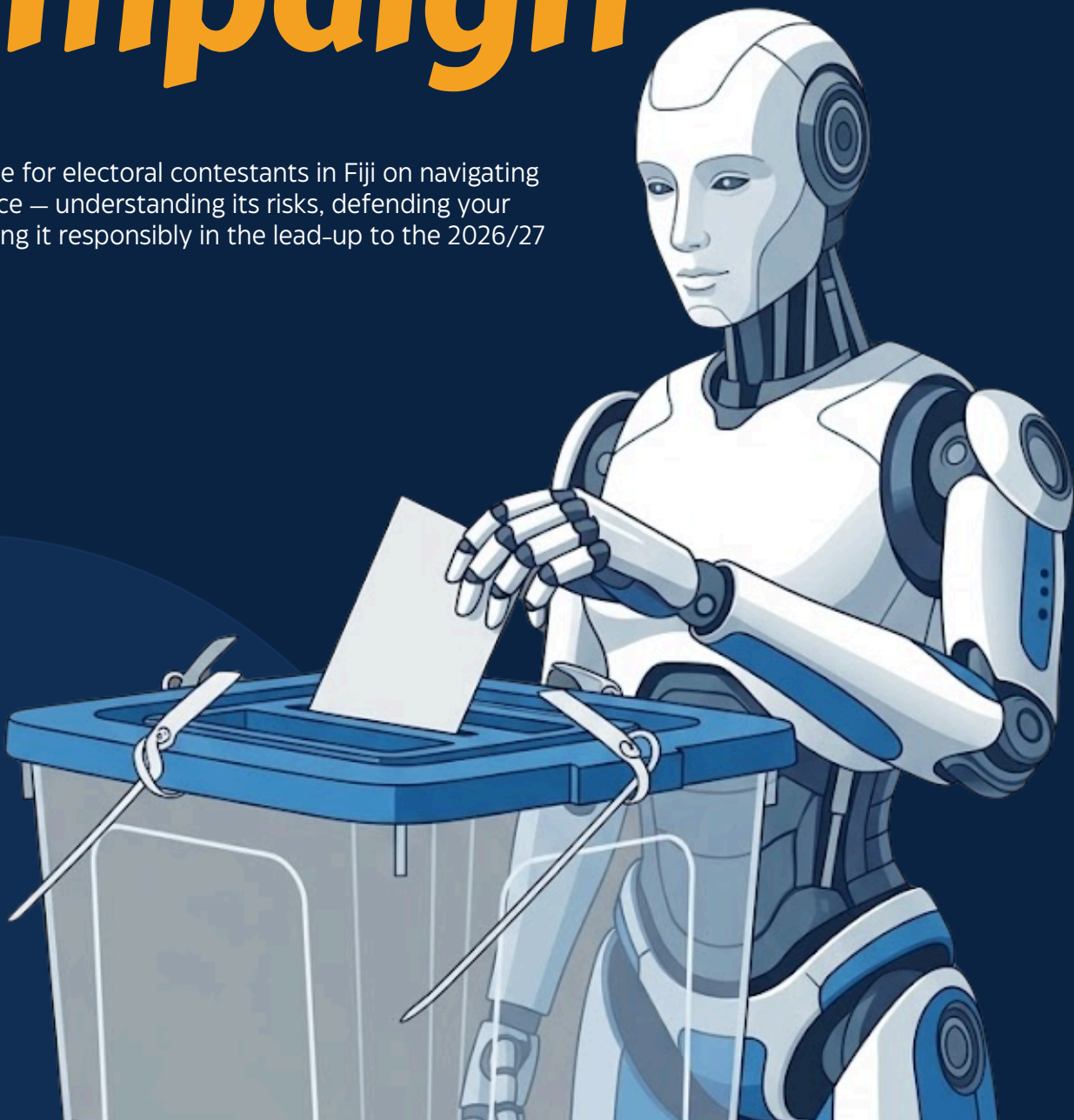


AI & *Your* Campaign

The essential guide for electoral contestants in Fiji on navigating artificial intelligence — understanding its risks, defending your campaign, and using it responsibly in the lead-up to the 2026/27 general elections.



First Edition 2026

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Why AI Matters for Fiji's Elections

Artificial intelligence has arrived in Pacific politics. Understanding it is no longer optional. It's your responsibility as a candidate.

The world just had its first "AI election cycle"

In 2024, over 3.7 billion eligible voters in 72 countries went to the polls, making it the largest election year in history. It was also the first year that AI-generated content appeared in elections at scale, across Asia, Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific.

The good news: the catastrophic "death of truth" that many feared did not happen. Most AI interference was quickly debunked. But the risks were real, and in at least one case, Romania, AI-powered manipulation was serious enough that election results were annulled.

Fiji is not immune. With some of the highest internet and social media penetration rates in the Pacific, and a politically engaged population, our elections are an attractive target for both local and external bad actors who may use AI to sow confusion and division.

KEY INSIGHT · HARVARD ASH CENTER RESEARCH

AI amplifies existing threats – and creates new ones too

Research from Harvard's Ash Center reviewing the 2024 super-cycle confirms AI mostly amplifies traditional campaign dirty tricks: smear campaigns, false voter information, and disinformation. But it makes these tactics cheaper, faster, and more convincing than ever before. A deepfake that once required a film studio can now be made in minutes on a smartphone.

Fiji-Specific Electoral Risk Matrix

Fiji faces unique risks due to its social history and the rapid adoption of social media platforms and Encrypted Messaging Apps (EMAs) like Viber and WhatsApp.

Threat Category	AI Mechanism	Local Impact in Fiji
Ethnic Incitement	Synthetic audio clones of political leaders making inflammatory racial slurs.	Erosion of multicultural unity and risk of communal unrest .
Institutional Trust	Deepfakes of FEO officials announcing "delayed results" or "rigged systems".	Loss of legitimacy for the Fijian Elections Office and post-election protests .
Moratorium Abuse	"Last-minute" deepfakes released 48 hours before voting during the legal silence period.	Candidates are legally unable to use media to debunk the fake before polls open .
Gender-Based Harm	Non-consensual AI-generated imagery targeting female candidates .	Systematic suppression of women's participation in Fijian politics .

IMPORTANT PERSPECTIVE

AI is not all bad – and you are not powerless

This toolkit is not designed to frighten you. AI is a tool – like a telephone, a printing press, or social media. It can be used for good or ill. This guide teaches you to recognise abuse, defend yourself, respond effectively, and use AI responsibly in your own campaign. Knowledge is your strongest protection.

The Fiji Digital Landscape

To understand AI threats, you first need to understand where Fijians get their information — and where disinformation spreads fastest.

~87%

of Fijians are online — well above regional average

77%

of Fijians use social media to access electoral information and learn about candidates

89%

of respondents in surveys have encountered false information online

91%

believe misinformation affects public perception of candidates and issues

65%

of online abuse complaints involve Meta platforms – Facebook & Instagram

22%

of women in Fiji frequently face image-based abuse

⚠ THE "COCONUT WIRELESS" EFFECT

False information does not stay online — it goes offline fast in Fiji's tight-knit communities

Island cultures rely heavily on close-knit social networks built on deep personal trust. A 2018 MIT study shows that disinformation travels faster and further than true information online. In Fiji's tightly connected communities, this effect is dramatically amplified. A false story posted on Facebook at 8am can be common knowledge across a village community by noon spread via Viber, Messenger and WhatsApp groups, religious networks, market conversations, and taxi drivers. Viral online rumours in the Pacific have triggered real-world panic, road blockades, and in extreme cases, communal tension. Electoral candidates must understand: the battle for truth is not just fought online.

PRIMARY PLATFORMS — RISK RANKING FOR FIJI'S 2026/27 ELECTIONS

Where AI-generated content will spread and how fast — ranked by risk level

1. **FACEBOOK (Highest risk):** Dominant platform for political information in Fiji. Confirmed source of 57.58% of all online abuse complaints logged with the Online Safety Commission. AI-generated fake news articles, fabricated images, and coordinated harassment campaigns spread fastest here.
2. **MESSENGER/ VIBER / WHATSAPP (High risk):** Private group messaging makes disinformation extremely hard to detect and counter. AI-scripted fake accounts operate in closed groups. False audio messages (including voice clones) are particularly dangerous here because they feel personal and trusted.
3. **TIKTOK (Growing risk):** Rapidly growing among Fijian youth. Short-form deepfake video spreads exponentially via the algorithm, often reaching large audiences before removal.
4. **YOUTUBE (Medium risk):** Used for longer political content. AI-generated "fake news channel" videos can appear credible and rank in search results for candidate names.

How AI Can Be Used Against You

AI gives bad actors new tools to attack candidates, suppress voters, and pollute the information environment. Here are the threats you need to know.



Deepfake Videos & Images

AI can create convincing videos or photos of you saying or doing things you never did. In Ghana's 2024 elections, fabricated recordings falsely accused candidates of election rigging. In Slovakia, a deepfake audio released during the electoral moratorium two days before the 2023 election contributed to an upset defeat. This threat is now accessible to anyone with a smartphone.

HIGH RISK



Voice Cloning & Audio Deepfakes

AI can clone your voice from just a few seconds of audio — from a speech, interview, or video. Fake audio of you saying controversial things can spread through WhatsApp groups before you even know it exists. In the US, a voice clone of President Biden was used in robocalls telling voters not to vote in a primary.

HIGH RISK



AI Fake News Sites

Between May 2023 and February 2024, the number of AI-generated fake news websites grew from 49 to over 700 globally. (As of 2026, this number has grown dramatically beyond 700.) These sites publish entirely fabricated stories with AI "authors," designed to look like legitimate news outlets. Stories about you can be seeded on these sites and then shared as "news" on social media.

GROWING



Bot Networks

AI-scripted networks of fake social media accounts can be deployed to flood comment sections, spread negative stories about you, or make fringe views appear mainstream. These "cyber troops" operate with scale and speed impossible for humans alone. In South Africa's 2024 election, bot networks were deployed to amplify disinformation, especially on WhatsApp.

ORGANISED



False Voter Information

AI-generated messages can spread false details about when, where, or how to vote — designed to prevent your supporters from casting valid ballots. In the 2016 US election, rumours circulated that people could vote by text. Fiji's new local government voter registration system creates specific opportunities for confusion-based suppression campaigns.

HIGH RISK



Gendered AI Attacks

Up to 99% of non-consensual pornographic deepfakes target women, making this a specific and devastating threat to female candidates. Research from Brazil, Mexico, India, and Indonesia confirms that female and LGBTQIA+ candidates are disproportionately targeted with fabricated personal misconduct content. This weaponises AI to deter women from running for office entirely.

SPECIFIC
THREAT



AI-Powered Scams Using Your Name

Your image and name may be used in fake investment advertisements, donation scams, or fraudulent fundraising — all generated by AI to look authentic. Voters may be defrauded, damaging your reputation by association even though you had no involvement.

FINANCIAL
CRIME



Information Flooding ("Firehose")

AI can generate so much conflicting, false content at such high speed that voters become confused about what is true. The goal is not necessarily to make people believe any specific lie but to make people distrust everything, including accurate information you publish about yourself.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

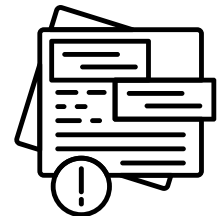
Deepfakes: Spot Them & Respond

A deepfake is synthetic or manipulated image, audio or video that falsely depicts a person or event. By late 2026, high-quality fakes may contain no obvious visual or audio mistakes. Treat 'tells' as reasons to investigate, not proof.

AI-GENERATED TEXT

Checking Suspicious Written Content

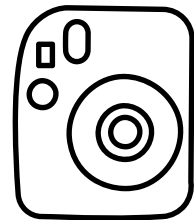
- Trace the claim to its original source; do not judge it by writing style alone.
- Check whether quoted people, documents, data and citations actually exist.
- Search the key claim across established media and relevant official sources.
- Inspect the website or account history, ownership and earlier posts.
- Open cited links; fabricated or irrelevant references remain a warning sign.
- Treat AI-text detector scores as weak evidence, never proof.



AI-GENERATED PHOTOS

Verifying Suspicious Images

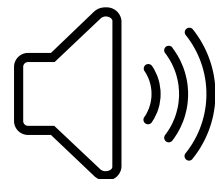
- Reverse-search the image with Google Lens or TinEye.
- Find the earliest version and compare crops, captions and context.
- Seek the original file where possible; screenshots and reposts lose useful information.
- Check Content Credentials or other provenance data when available.
- Verify the event, place and time using independent photos, witnesses or reporting.
- Odd details can raise suspicion; normal-looking details do not prove authenticity.



AI VOICE CLONES & AUDIO

Verifying Suspicious Audio

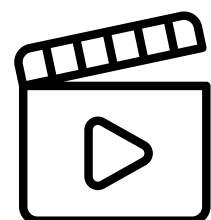
- Unnatural cadence or rhythm
- Missing breath sounds between sentences
- No ambient background noise for the claimed setting
- Words or phrases that feel "on the nose" — too perfectly outrageous
- Sent through WhatsApp or anonymous channels (no verifiable source)
- Emotion sounds flat or mismatched to what is being said



AI-GENERATED VIDEO

Verifying Suspicious Video

- Extract key frames and reverse-search them.
- Verify location, date and event from independent evidence.
- Check provenance, Content Credentials or a vendor watermark where available.
- Lip-sync, blinking and lighting clues are not conclusive.
- For high-stakes cases, seek professional or journalistic forensic verification.



When a Deepfake Targets YOU – What To Do

Research from the 2024 global supercycle shows clearly: how a candidate responds to a deepfake attack in the first hours is often more important than the attack itself. Candidates who responded quickly, calmly, and with specific counter-evidence consistently minimised damage. Those who ignored attacks, responded angrily, or responded inaccurately often made the situation significantly worse.

1

Stay calm. Do NOT share or repost.

Every time you share the deepfake – even to debunk it – you amplify its algorithmic reach and expose it to new audiences. Do not comment on it on your personal or campaign channels until you have completed steps 2 and 3. Brief your inner circle immediately but maintain external silence. The impulse to "set the record straight" immediately is understandable but often counterproductive.

2

Document everything immediately

Screenshot the content with the URL, posting account, date, time, platform, and visible share/like counts. Do this immediately – content is often deleted once the perpetrator realises it has been reported. Save copies to a secure location (cloud storage not just your phone). This documentation is important for platform reports, FEO complaints, OSC complaints, police reports, and possible legal action. Note any accounts or pages that are amplifying it.

3

Release authentic counter-content quickly

Film a clear, direct, face-to-camera video response – not scripted, not over-produced, demonstrably "live." State precisely what the deepfake claims, why it is false, and what the truth is. Be specific: vague denials ("that's not true") carry almost no weight. Show your face clearly and speak calmly – composure builds credibility. If the deepfake places you somewhere you were not, show evidence of where you actually were. Post this immediately to your official channels and send it directly to trusted journalists.

4

Report to the platform, the FEO and the Online Safety Commission

Report the content to the platform (Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, YouTube) using their built-in reporting tools. Simultaneously file a complaint with the Fijian Elections Office and Fiji's Online Safety Commission. See Section 10 for reporting details.

5

Mobilise trusted validators

Ask community leaders, religious figures, journalists, and civil society organisations you trust to publicly verify your authentic response. A trusted third-party voice carries more weight than your own denial alone.

The Liar's Dividend: When Truth Becomes Uncertain

One of the most insidious effects of deepfakes is not simply making people believe false things — it is creating generalised uncertainty about everything, including authentic, verified truth. This "Liar's Dividend" (a term coined by legal scholars Robert Chesney and Danielle Keats Citron in 2018) cuts in two dangerous directions — both of which directly threaten Fiji's 2026 elections.

THE CLASSIC PROBLEM

Real things dismissed as AI fakes

A genuine, authentic recording of a candidate saying something embarrassing or incriminating can now be dismissed as "obviously a deepfake" — even when it is 100% real. In April 2023, an Indian politician was caught on audio tape criticising members of his own party. Rather than apologise, he publicly claimed the recording was AI-generated. Forensic analysis later confirmed it was authentic but the damage to public clarity was done. The claim created sufficient doubt to blunt the story's political impact. In Fiji, be prepared for opponents (or their supporters) to use this tactic against genuinely compromising material.

THE REVERSE PROBLEM

AI fakes presented as real

Conversely, convincing AI fakes of you (or your opponents) saying something outrageous can be spread as "leaked footage" or "caught on camera." Once widely shared, a denial — even a completely truthful one — sounds self-serving and suspicious. The damage is done long before the facts can catch up. Research shows false information travels six times faster than true information on social media. In Slovakia in 2023, a deepfake audio clip of a candidate appeared two days before the election, too close to voting day for effective rebuttal.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE: BUILD CREDIBILITY BEFORE ANY CRISIS OCCURS

The best protection against the Liar's Dividend is a pre-established reputation for transparency and consistency — built long before any attack happens

The candidates most resistant to the Liar's Dividend are those who have already created a rich, consistent archive of authentic public content. This works as "credibility insurance": when a deepfake appears, your genuine archive makes it far easier for fact-checkers and your community to identify the fake. Start building this baseline now — before the campaign period begins. Post regular, authentic, unedited videos of community meetings, walkabouts, and policy announcements. Date and geotag them visibly. Build relationships with trusted journalists and community validators so they know your authentic "voice" and can quickly identify AI imposters.

THREE PRACTICAL STEPS TO BUILD CREDIBILITY INSURANCE

Actions you can take in the next 30 days, before your campaign formally begins



Create a Content Baseline

Regularly post authentic, unedited video on your official channels — speeches, community meetings, walkabouts. Date-stamp them visibly. This archive makes fakes easier to expose.



Cultivate Media Relationships

Having established relationships with journalists and civic groups before an attack happens means you have trusted channels ready to amplify your response.



Communicate Your Standards Publicly

Tell your supporters — before an attack — that you will never deny something real, and that you will always verify before sharing. This makes your denials more believable when they matter.

The SIFT Method: Your Fact-Checking Tool

Before you share anything political — and before you respond to anything targeting you — run it through SIFT. This simple four-step method is used by electoral officials and journalists worldwide.

S

Stop

Before reacting — especially if the content makes you angry, scared, or triumphant — pause. Strong emotional reactions are exactly what disinformation is designed to trigger.

I

Investigate the Source

Who posted this? Is the account new? Does it have a real following? Is the website established? Search the source name — not the claim itself.

F

Find Better Coverage

Search for the claim on The Fiji Times, FBC, Fiji Sun, MaITV, FijiTV and fijiivillage. If it's genuinely newsworthy, established outlets will report it. If only unknown sites carry it — be suspicious.

T

Trace to the Original

Find the original source of the quote, image, or video. Use Google reverse image search. Check if a photo was taken years ago and reused in a new false context.

✓ Always Do This

- ✓ Verify with at least two independent reputable sources before sharing
- ✓ Check the account age and posting history of whoever shared it first
- ✓ Use SIFT on content that favours you just as rigorously as content against you
- ✓ Wait for the full picture before commenting publicly on breaking news
- ✓ Encourage your supporters to verify before sharing on your behalf
- ✓ Keep screenshots and records of disinformation targeting your campaign

✗ Never Do This

- ✗ Share unverified content even if it favours your campaign — it will backfire
- ✗ React emotionally in public to unverified attacks
- ✗ Dismiss deepfakes without checking — some alleged deepfakes are real
- ✗ Share AI-generated disinformation about your opponents — this is illegal
- ✗ Engage in or encourage coordinated inauthentic behaviour on social media
- ✗ Spread false voter information about registration, venues, or voting dates

Fiji Scenarios: What Could Happen & What To Do

SCENARIO A

Viber/WhatsApp voice note: AI clone of your voice "confessing" to corruption

A voice note that sounds exactly like you appears in Viber/WhatsApp groups, in which you apparently admit to taking bribes. It spreads through village networks within hours. By the time you hear about it, hundreds of people have received it. There is no video — just audio.

✓ DO THIS:

Stay calm. Record an immediate authentic video of yourself, dated and timestamped, directly refuting the claim. Send it to the same WhatsApp groups via trusted community contacts. Simultaneously file a complaint with the Fiji OSC (1530) and the FEO.

SCENARIO B

Deepfake photo: You "posing" with a controversial figure or at a controversial event

A photo appears on Facebook showing you apparently attending an event or meeting with a person or group that would alienate your voter base. The image is shared by anonymous accounts. It gets 500 shares before you know about it. The photo looks very real.

✓ DO THIS:

Use the SIFT method publicly. Post the real photo from where you actually were at that time (if possible). Ask a trusted journalist to run a reverse image search and publish the results. Report to the platform and the FEO.

SCENARIO C

Fake voter information: AI-generated flyer with wrong polling location or dates

A professional-looking flyer circulates in your ward, mimicking the FEO's visual style, giving incorrect voting dates or wrong polling venues for your key supporter base. It appears targeted at specific communities. Voters are genuinely confused.

✓ DO THIS:

Immediately report to the FEO (331 6225). Release a clear statement redirecting voters to the official FEO website (feo.org.fj) for accurate information. Do not replicate the false flyer content even to debunk it — just link directly to official sources. Alert community leaders and churches who can spread the correction.

SCENARIO D

AI-generated "news article": Fake outlet publishes fabricated scandal story

A new website publishes a detailed "investigative report" about a financial or personal scandal involving you. It has a professional layout, fake citations, and an AI-generated "journalist" byline. Other social media accounts begin sharing it as if it is real journalism.

✓ DO THIS:

Do NOT link to the fake site (increases search ranking). Screenshot with URL. File with FEO. Provide accurate facts to established Fijian media outlets directly.

SCENARIO E - Women

Non-consensual sexualised AI content targeting a female candidate

A female candidate discovers AI-generated, sexualised or degrading imagery of her circulating on social media and private messaging groups. This form of AI weaponisation is documented globally and disproportionately targets women in politics. It is designed not just to attack reputation but to cause psychological harm and deter candidacy.

✓ DO THIS:

This is a serious crime under Fiji's Online Safety. Do not suffer in silence. Report immediately to the Online Safety Commission (1530 or onlinesafety.org.fj). Reach out to trusted civil society organisations including CDD, FWRM and FWCC for support.

SCENARIO F

Your opponent uses the "Liar's Dividend": Claims real video of them is a deepfake

Genuine, verified footage of your opponent saying something controversial surfaces. Rather than addressing it, they claim the video is an AI deepfake. Their supporters amplify this claim. The mainstream media is confused about what to report.

✓ DO THIS:

Do not simply assert the video is real — prove it. Provide the original source and context. Encourage established journalists with verification tools to investigate. Use InVID / WeVerify analysis. If the video was filmed by a credible third party, have them publicly confirm its authenticity. Avoid inflammatory language — let the verified facts speak.

Rapid Response Playbook

When AI-generated disinformation hits your campaign, the first hours are critical. Here is a structured response framework based on best practices from global election cycles.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Speed matters – but accuracy matters more

Research shows that false information spreads further and faster than true information. You need to respond quickly – but a rushed inaccurate counter-response is worse than a measured, delayed one. Build your response capacity now, before an incident happens. Identify your response team, trusted validators, and contact list in advance.

MINUTES 0–30 · ASSESS

Verify and document before acting

Screenshot everything. Identify: What exactly is claimed? Where did it appear? How far has it spread? Is it AI-generated or real content taken out of context? Apply SIFT. Do not comment publicly yet. Call your most trusted advisor.

MINUTES 30–60 · DECIDE

Determine the correct response approach

Is this a small-scale attack that will burn out on its own? (Sometimes silence is correct.) Or is it spreading significantly and requires active rebuttal? Who are the audiences most affected? What is the single most important truth to communicate?

HOURS 1–3 · RESPOND

Release your authentic, calm, factual response

Film a short, clear, face-to-camera video. State what the claim is, why it is false, and what the truth is. Be specific. Use your own name and the specific false claim – vague denials fail. Post it to your official channels and send it to your trusted media contacts. Do not let anger or hurt enter your response.

HOURS 3–6 · AMPLIFY

Mobilise validators and trusted networks

Ask community leaders, religious figures, civil society contacts, and party officials to share your verified response in their own words. Reach out to The Fiji Times, FBC, Fiji Sun, fijivillage, Fiji TV and MaiTV directly with your factual account. If the incident involves voter information, contact the FEO immediately so they can issue official correction.

HOURLY 6 ONWARDS · REPORT & MONITOR

File complaints and track the spread

Report to the FEO, Online Safety Commission, and the relevant social media platforms. Continue monitoring for new iterations of the false content. Keep your response team briefed. Document everything for potential legal action. Inform CDD and other civil society monitoring organisations.

Using AI Responsibly in Your Campaign

AI is not only a threat — it is a powerful tool that candidates can use ethically and legally to run more effective, more accessible campaigns. Here is how to use it responsibly.



Drafting Policy & Speeches

AI writing tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini can help you draft policy position papers, press releases, speeches, and community letters significantly faster. This is especially valuable for candidates without large campaign teams. Critical rule: always thoroughly review, edit, and personalise every AI draft before publishing. Never publish AI content that does not genuinely reflect your views and is not accurate. AI writing tools can hallucinate facts — always verify specific claims independently.



Translation & Multilingual Outreach

Fiji is a multilingual society. AI translation tools can help make your campaign materials accessible in iTaukei, Fiji Hindi, Rotuman, and other community languages — expanding your reach and demonstrating genuine respect for all communities. Review all translations with a native speaker before distribution. Cultural nuance is something AI often misses, and a translation error in a political context can be very damaging. Use AI as a first draft, human review as the final step.



Analysing Voter Concerns

AI can help you process and analyse large volumes of text data — survey responses, social media feedback, community consultation notes — to identify patterns in what issues matter most to your voters. Tools like NotebookLM, ChatGPT's data analysis features, or simple AI-powered spreadsheet analysis can turn hours of manual reading into structured insights. This allows smaller campaigns to compete with the analytical capacity of better-resourced opponents.



Campaign Graphics & Design

AI design tools such as Canva AI, Adobe Firefly, and DALL-E can help produce professional-quality campaign posters, social media graphics, banners, and infographics at low cost or free. This levels the playing field for candidates without design budgets. Critical rule: never use AI to generate images of real people — including opponents, community members, or yourself — as this risks creating misleading content. Stick to designed graphics, icons, patterns, and abstract imagery.



Voter Information Chatbots

A simple AI chatbot embedded in your campaign website or Facebook page can answer voters' frequently asked questions about your policies, your background, and local issues — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is especially valuable during the local government elections where many voters will have questions about ward-level issues and council functions. Critical rule: ensure the chatbot only makes claims that are fully accurate and verified. Misleading chatbot responses are your legal and reputational responsibility.



Social Media Management

AI-powered social media management tools (such as Buffer, Hootsuite, or Meta's own scheduling tools) can help you plan content calendars, schedule posts for optimal times, manage multiple platforms simultaneously, and analyse which content resonates most with your audience. These are standard, fully ethical, widely-used tools in modern political campaigning around the world. They save significant campaign staff time and improve the consistency of your digital presence.

THE CORE ETHICAL RULE

Label AI content. Be transparent. Never deceive.

Any campaign material substantially generated by AI — especially images, audio, or video — should be clearly labelled as such. Transparency builds trust. Deception destroys it. Brazil's 2024 elections operated under regulations requiring labelling of AI-generated political content. Fiji does not yet have equivalent law, but this toolkit asks you to voluntarily uphold this standard as a mark of integrity.

Your AI Campaign Ethics Checklist

Use this checklist as a daily reference during your campaign. Review it with your team at the start of each campaign week. Any time you are uncertain whether a particular use of AI is appropriate, return to this page. If something is not explicitly on the "DO" list, apply the core ethical rule: would a reasonable, informed voter consider this transparent and honest? If not, do not do it.

✓ ALWAYS DO THIS

✓ Label all AI-generated content clearly

Any post, video, image, or written material substantially generated by AI should say so. Be explicit: "This graphic was designed with AI assistance." Transparency is not weakness — it is integrity.

✓ Use AI to communicate genuine, human policy positions

AI should amplify your authentic voice and ideas, not replace them. The policies, values, and commitments must be genuinely yours.

✓ Apply the same verification standards to everything

Apply SIFT equally to content that benefits you and content that harms you. Your credibility rests on consistent standards.

✓ Use AI for translation and multilingual outreach

Making your materials accessible across Fiji's language communities is ethical and important — AI can assist this effectively when reviewed by human speakers.

✓ Maintain human oversight and final judgement over all AI output

Never publish AI content without a human reading, reviewing, and approving it. AI makes factual errors. The responsibility is always yours.

✓ Keep records of all AI tools you use in your campaign

Maintain a simple log of which AI tools you use, for what purpose, and when. This protects you if questions are raised later.

✓ Encourage your campaign team to follow these same standards

Your volunteers and staff act on your behalf. Brief them clearly. Their AI use is your responsibility.

✗ NEVER DO THIS

✗ Generate fake content of opponents or anyone else

Creating deepfake images, audio, or video of opponents, community members, or public figures is a serious ethical violation — and potentially criminal under Fiji's Cybercrime Act.

✗ Create fake accounts or deceptive networks

Using AI to run networks of fake accounts, astroturf campaigns, or coordinated harassment is election fraud. It also severely damages democratic culture in Fiji.

✗ Deploy chatbots or AI tools that mislead voters

If your AI voter chatbot makes inaccurate claims about your policies, your record, or your opponents, that is deliberate deception. You are legally and reputationally responsible for what your AI tools say.

✗ Use AI to generate or spread false voter information

Distributing AI-generated content that gives voters wrong polling dates, venues, or registration instructions is a criminal offence under the Electoral Act 2014.

✗ Use microtargeting to exploit fear or community divisions

Using AI data analysis to identify and exploit specific community fears, ethnic tensions, or personal vulnerabilities is deeply unethical — even if not currently illegal in Fiji.

✗ Publish AI content without human review for accuracy

AI tools frequently "hallucinate" facts — inventing statistics, misattributing quotes, or fabricating citations. Publishing AI content unchecked exposes you to serious reputational and legal risk.

✗ Deny using AI when you have used it

If questioned about your use of AI tools in your campaign, be honest. Denial is significantly more damaging than transparency when discovered — and it will be discovered.

Legal Framework & Reporting in Fiji

Understanding the legal framework helps you protect yourself and know when and how to report AI-enabled disinformation and electoral interference.

Electoral Act 2014

The primary legislation for Fiji's national elections. Section 144A specifically prohibits the publication of false statements likely to influence an election's outcome or diminish public confidence in the Fijian Elections Office. AI-generated deepfakes designed to mislead voters or damage candidate reputations fall squarely under this provision. The Supervisor must report probable election-related criminal offences to FICAC for investigation, ensuring rigorous oversight of digital interference.

Online Safety Act 2018

This Act establishes the Online Safety Commission to deter harmful "electronic communications," which includes AI-generated text and recordings. Section 24 criminalises posting content intended to cause "serious emotional distress". Crucially, Section 25 provides specific protection against non-consensual "intimate visual recordings," a vital defence for female candidates targeted by AI-generated sexual imagery. Filing a free complaint (call 1548) is the fastest route for content removal.

Cybercrime Act 2021

This legislation targets illegal acts involving "computer data" and "information," which legally encompasses AI-generated content. Section 9 criminalises "computer-related forgery" involving inauthentic data created for gain or to cause loss. Furthermore, Section 18 empowers police to issue expedited preservation notices, forcing service providers to retain digital logs and AI metadata for up to 90 days, which is essential for identifying the source of attacks. For serious cybercrime involving election interference, report to Fiji Police Cybercrime Unit at 1681 or 331 5599.

Crimes Act 2009

The Act provides broad defences against digital content that threatens public order. Section 65(2) criminalises using any communication, including electronic communication, to spread reports likely to incite communal antagonism or promote ill-will between different groups. This is a critical barrier against AI-generated voice clones designed to trigger ethnic or social unrest. Section 67 further criminalises the distribution of seditious publications produced with intent to excite disaffection against the Government.

2013 Constitution

The Constitution provides the legal foundation for restricting digital interference in the democratic process. While Section 17(1) guarantees freedom of expression, Section 17(3)(a) explicitly permits laws that limit this right in the interests of "the orderly conduct of elections". This allows the State to legally restrict AI-enabled disinformation that threatens electoral integrity.

Note: these mechanisms should never be misused to silence legitimate political criticism or satire.

Local Govt Elections Regs 2025

Specific to the 2026 municipal polls, Regulation 126 prohibits publishing false statements likely to influence the outcome. Because AI-generated flyers or posts are legally treated as "published information," they are subject to removal or correction orders by the Supervisor. These regulations ensure that local candidates are protected from AI-driven smear campaigns and false voter information regarding polling locations or dates.

KEY CONTACTS:

- FEO: 331 6225 · Online Safety Commission: 1548 (toll free) · Fiji Police Cybercrime: 1681
- FICAC: 1322 (toll free)

Who to Contact & How to Report



Fijian Elections Office (FEO)

The primary body for reporting administrative electoral violations and false statements under Section 144A of the Electoral Act 2014. Report any AI-generated content intended to mislead voters about polling dates and venues, or deepfakes designed to diminish public confidence in the electoral process

☎ +679 331 6225 · feo.org.fj · 59-63 High St, Toorak, Suva



Fiji Online Safety Commission

Your fastest avenue for the removal of harmful digital content under the Online Safety Act 2018. The OSC handles complaints regarding online harm, defamation, and specifically, the non-consensual distribution of "intimate visual recordings"—a critical protection for candidates targeted by sexualised deepfakes

☎ 1548 (free call) · 330 0547 · osc.com.fj



Fiji Police Force — Cybercrime Unit

Report criminal acts involving computer data under the Cybercrime Act 2021, including computer-related forgery and identity theft. 💡 STRATEGIC TIP: When reporting, specifically request an "Expedited Preservation Notice" under Section 18. This legally requires service providers to retain digital evidence and AI metadata for up to 90 days for the investigation.

☎ 1681 (free call) · 331 5599 (ask for cybercrime unit) · police.gov.fj



FICAC (Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption)

The lead body for investigating election-related criminal offences. Under Section 18 of the Electoral Act 2014, the Supervisor of Elections is required to report probable criminal breaches (such as bribery, undue influence, or criminal disinformation) specifically to FICAC for investigation.

☎ 1322 (free call) · 331 0290 · ficac.org.fj



Centre for Democracy & Dialogue

Civil society organisation providing support, documentation assistance, and civic space for candidates facing disinformation. Publisher of this toolkit.

☎ 777 8379 · cdd.org.fj

REPORTING TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

How to report suspicious or harmful AI-enabled content



Facebook / Instagram: Use Report and choose the closest available reason, such as impersonation, false information, scam/fraud, harassment or manipulated media. Menu wording changes over time.



TikTok: Use Report on the video, account or message and select the closest reason, such as misinformation, impersonation, fraud/scam or harassment.



YouTube: Report the video or channel and use the closest current category, including misleading/deceptive content, impersonation, scams or harassment where applicable.



WhatsApp: Preserve the message or file first, then block or report the sender or group where appropriate. Private forwarding may require trusted contacts to distribute the correction.

The Candidate's AI Integrity Pledge

Centre for Democracy & Dialogue invites all candidates in the 2026/27 General Elections to voluntarily commit to these standards. This pledge is a mark of democratic integrity.

THE PLEDGE



"I commit to running my campaign with honesty, transparency, and respect for the democratic rights of every voter in Fiji. I will not use AI to deceive, manipulate, or suppress. I will label AI-generated content clearly. I will verify before I share. And I will report AI-enabled disinformation wherever I see it."

Candidate Signature

Date



Uphold Fijian Democratic Values

Fiji's democracy has faced significant tests over the decades. Each of us who contests an election carries a responsibility to strengthen, not weaken, democratic culture and public trust in elections.



Protect the Information Environment

The information environment is shared. When we pollute it with false content (even content that benefits us in the short term) we harm voters' ability to make free and informed choices. That is the foundation of democracy.



Win on Merit, Not Manipulation

Fiji deserves leaders who win by articulating genuine visions for our communities, not by manipulating perceptions through artificial means. If you have a strong case to make, make it honestly.

KEY MESSAGE

A Commitment That Protects Democracy

Elections test more than popularity. They test character. In a time when a fake video can travel faster than the truth, the real difference between candidates is not just what they promise, but how they choose to compete. This pledge is a line drawn in the sand. It says that winning will never come at the cost of deceiving voters, that trust is not something to be traded for advantage. When candidates hold that line, they steady the entire process. They give voters something solid to stand on. And in doing so, they protect not just their own campaign, but the very idea of a fair election in Fiji.

Resources, Tools & Further Reading

The following tools, organisations, and publications form a good support ecosystem for candidates navigating AI and elections in Fiji. All tools marked with (FREE) are available at no cost. Bookmark these before your campaign begins.

IN FIJI & THE PACIFIC



Fijian Elections Office

Official voter registration, candidate information, election rules for both local and general elections.

feo.org.fj · 331 6225



Centre for Democracy & Dialogue

Electoral integrity, civic engagement, election monitoring, voter education, candidate preparation.

dialoguefiji.org



Lowy Institute Pacific Research

Research on Pacific disinformation, social media, and democratic resilience.

lowyinstitute.org



Online Safety Commission

Complaints service for online harm, intimate image dissemination and harassment.

1530 (free) · onlinesafety.org.fj

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES



International IDEA

"Artificial Intelligence for Electoral Management" (2024) — the definitive global reference for electoral management bodies on AI opportunities and risks.

idea.int



McAfee AI Election Toolkit

C2PA is a digital "nutrition label" that cryptographically proves media authenticity, allowing candidates to instantly verify official campaign content and expose deepfakes.

c2pa.org



Newtral's FactFlow AI

FactFlow AI is a multimodal tool that lets candidates detect viral AI hoaxes early to launch instant, fact-based counters.

newtral.es



Harvard Ash Center

"The Role of AI in the 2024 Elections" — evidence-based post-cycle analysis by Danielle Allen, Nate Persily, and Bruce Schneier.

ash.harvard.edu

FREE TOOLS FOR CANDIDATES

Technology you can use right now to protect your campaign



Google Reverse Image Search (images.google.com) — Drag any suspicious image to instantly find its origin and check if it's been used in other contexts



InVID / WeVerify (weverify.eu) — Free browser extension that breaks down videos frame-by-frame to detect manipulation



TinEye (tineye.com) — Reverse image search specifically designed to find where photos have appeared previously



Botometer (botometer.osome.iu.edu) — Analyses whether a social media account is likely a bot or a real person



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