

# 2026 EMPLOYEE SCREENING TRENDS REPORT

The State of Hiring, Verification &  
Workforce Trust in South Africa





# The Future of Employee Screening Starts Here.

As the world of work continues to evolve, so too do the risks associated with recruitment. Advances in artificial intelligence, increasingly sophisticated identity fraud, and changing regulatory requirements are reshaping the way organisations approach hiring and employee verification.

This report provides an overview of the latest employee screening trends observed by iFacts between June 2025 and May 2026. Combining industry insights, verification statistics, and digital engagement trends, it highlights the growing importance of accurate, compliant, and risk-based screening in today's employment landscape.

## THIS YEAR'S KEY FINDINGS



**34%**

**Driver's Licence Verifications Returned Invalid.**



**67%**

**Firearm Competency Checks Were Invalid**



**6%**

**ID Verification Checks Were Invalid or Inconsistent.**



**6%**

**Criminal Record Checks Identified Reportable Criminal Records**



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# 01 | Global Employee Screening Trends 2026



01

## CONTINUOUS VETTING & MONITORING

Employers are moving from a one-time pre-hire check to ongoing monitoring. Continuous vetting detects changes after hire, reduces insider and regulatory risk, and supports rapid response to emerging threats.



02

## AI & AUTOMATION

Automation enhances routine checks and AI identifies anomalies, boosting efficiency and early detection. However, algorithms may yield false positives or bias, necessitating human validation of AI findings and controls for explainability, quality data, and lawful privacy usage.



03

## RISK-BASED, ROLE-SPECIFIC & HOLISTIC SCREENING

Screening should be calibrated to job-specific roles:

- more in-depth checks for finance, procurement, IT, healthcare, and executive roles;
- entry-level checks for low-risk roles.



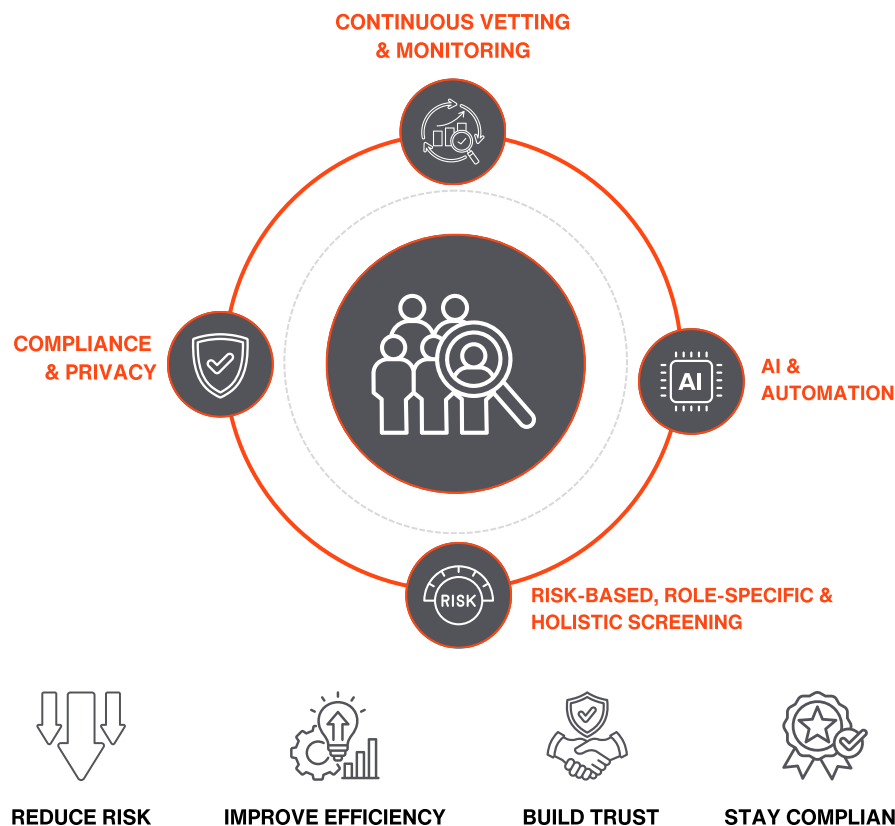
04

## COMPLIANCE & PRIVACY

Effective screening requires a few key elements: legal consent, minimal data use, secure handling, and fair processes. Important practices include managing vendors, following POPIA/GDPR, clear communication with candidates, and keeping records. These steps help justify decisions and comply with regulations.

## AT A GLANCE

The future of employee screening is built on four key pillars.



# 02 | South African Employee Screening Trends

## 01 CONTINUOUS VETTING & MONITORING

- ✓ Organisations are shifting from recruitment-only screening to more comprehensive approaches by:
  - Re-screening high-risk roles (finance, IT, etc.) regularly.
  - Conducting fresh checks during promotions, role changes, or misconduct allegations.
  - Monitoring sanctions, PEP status, and adverse media for senior and regulated staff.

## 02 EMPLOYEE SCREENING POLICIES

- ✓ Employers are developing policies that address the risks associated with various positions.
- ✓ Employee screening policies are now discussed with procurement, legal and risk executives.

## 03 COMPLIANCE

- POPIA** has changed how screening is done:
- ✓ Clear consent per check, with purpose, retention and access explained.
  - ✓ Privacy compliance is now a core screening KPI.

## 04 INTEGRITY ASSESSMENTS ARE BEING USED MORE OFTEN

- ✓ To identify attitudes to theft, fraud and rule-breaking.
- ✓ Applying lifestyle and conflict-of-interest checks to executives, procurement and public-sector-linked positions.
- ✓ Identifying if AI will be used with integrity in the workplace.

## 05 INDUSTRY SPECIFIC CHECKS ARE OFTEN NOW ESSENTIAL

- Certain sectors are under particular pressure:**
- ✓ In the financial services sector, preparations for COFI involve tighter fit-and-proper vetting, regulatory and credit checks, and ongoing monitoring. Similarly, call centres are implementing more rigorous screening processes as agents manage both local and international client data under POPIA and foreign laws. Meanwhile, in logistics, retail, and warehousing, more stringent checks are being introduced to address theft-prone environments.

## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026



### Criminal Record Checks

Criminal record checks remain one of the most commonly requested pre-employment screenings across all industries.



#### Criminal Records

identified reportable criminal records during the screening period.



A criminal record check is a common pre-employment requirement, but it is only one indicator of risk. In South Africa, conviction rates for reported crimes are low, often in the single to low double digits, meaning that a lack of conviction does not ensure no risk, and past convictions do not always predict future behaviour.

## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026



### Identity Verification

6%

Invalid IDs



Identity documents in South Africa are marked invalid due to several issues:



**Legacy document vulnerabilities:** Older ID books and inconsistent capture processes increase forgery risks.



**Corruption & improper issuance:** Corrupt insiders can improperly issue or fail to cancel documents.



**Identity theft & synthetic identities:** Data breaches allow criminals to create fake profiles.

# 03

## Common Background Checks 2026



### Driver's Licence Verification



**34%**

**Invalid  
Licences**



**48%**

**Invalid  
PDPs**



**14%**

**Outstanding  
Traffic Fines**



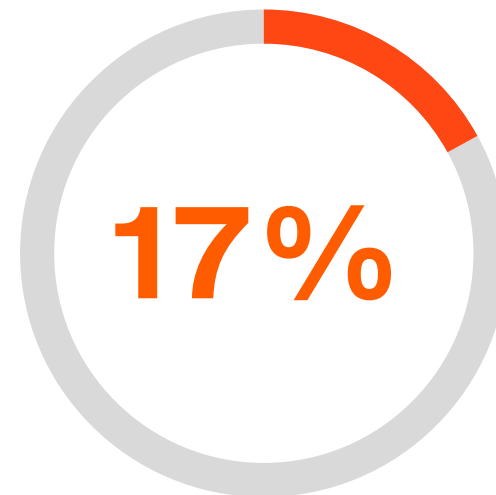
The rise in invalid driver's licences in South Africa reflects a mix of **systemic weaknesses** and **criminal opportunism**, as well as an archaic licence issuing system that leaves individuals waiting months for renewed or new licences.

# 03

## Common Background Checks 2026



### Credit Checks



**17% of credit checks showed adverse information.**

Adverse credit results are a valuable red flag in screening but must be treated as one part of a wider assessment, investigated, contextualised, and handled fairly and legally.



Credit checks are conducted on individuals based on job specific roles.

## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026



### Educational Qualifications

#### MATRIC

8%

#### VERIFICATION OF SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE (MATRIC)

8% of matric qualifications were invalid.

In South Africa, matric certificates may be deemed invalid due to fraud, administrative errors, and system issues. Organised syndicates produce convincing counterfeit certificates, and presenting a false qualification can lead to severe criminal and regulatory consequences.

#### TERTIARY

4%

#### VERIFICATION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

4% of tertiary qualifications were invalid.

Tertiary qualifications verified in South Africa are flagged as invalid due to a combination of causes:

- deliberate fraud and forged diplomas;
- graduates using documents from unaccredited or bogus providers;
- administrative errors and data-entry mismatches at institutions;
- withheld or replaced certificates not reflected in registries; and
- identity inconsistencies (name/ID number mismatches).

## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026



### Industry Registration Verification



**PSIRA**



**Professional Bodies**



Association verification is a critical step in background screening that confirms professional registration/standing.



#### **Fraudulent documents are more prevalent now.**

Across industries and jurisdictions, we are seeing a clear uptick driven by advances in generative AI that produce convincing text and imagery.

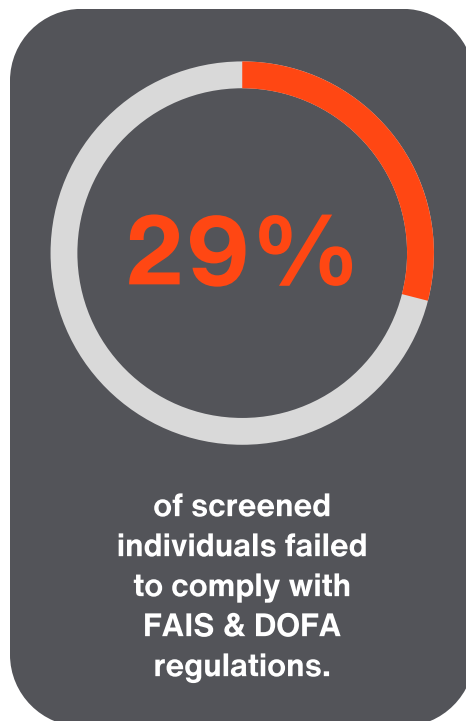
# 03

## Common Background Checks 2026



### FAIS / DOFA / COFI

#### FAIS, DOFA AND THE NEWLY PROPOSED COFI



The high non-compliance rate with FAIS and DOFA reflects that many advisors and support staff are:

- > Unaware of registration or renewal requirements or;
- > Lack the required fit-and-proper records;
- > Sometimes hire to fill urgent vacancies without full pre-hire verification;
- > Licence lapses, incomplete CPD, or incorrect/ product-specific authorisations are common;
- > Falsified certificates.



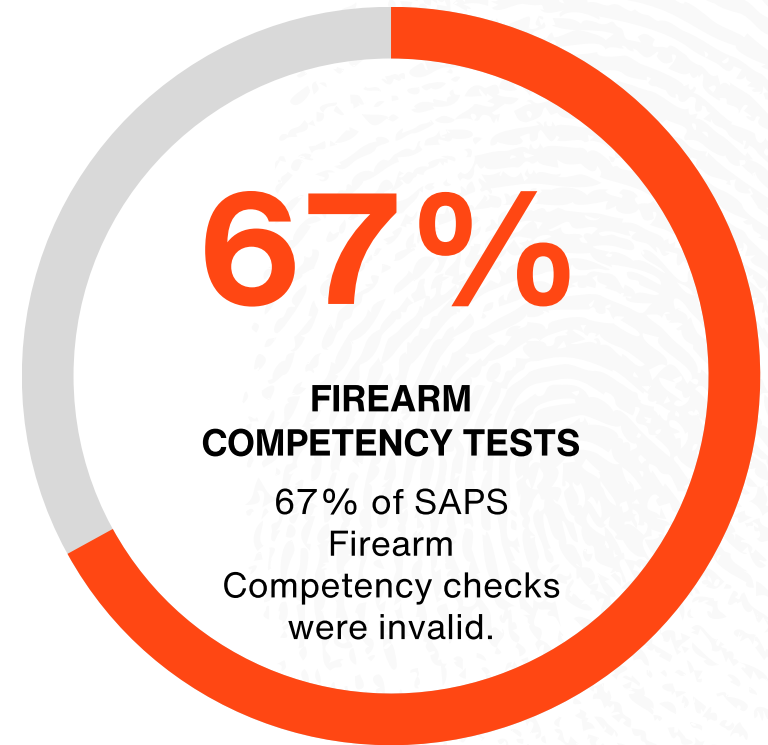
The emergence of **COFI** (the Conduct of Financial Institutions framework) raises the stakes further by demanding stronger governance, culture, and accountability across financial firms, making robust screening and continuous vetting not just best practice but a critical compliance requirement to demonstrate that staff are authorised, competent, and operating within required conduct standards.

## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026



### Firearm Competency

This scale of invalidation points to both enforcement and record-keeping weaknesses and underscores the need for direct SAPS confirmations, stricter accreditation oversight for trainers, improved identity verification at enrolment, and tighter employer due diligence before assigning firearm duties.



## 03 | Common Background Checks 2026

**60%**  
**WORK  
PERMITS WERE  
INVALID**



### Work Permits

The high rate of work permits verified as invalid in South Africa reflects:

- a mix of administrative, fraud and migration-pressure factors including:
  - counterfeit or tampered documents and misuse of expired or inappropriate permit types;
  - unregistered or unscrupulous immigration agents submitting bogus applications;
  - data-entry errors and slow record updates at home affairs and labour departments.

# 04

## Lifestyle Audits



### SOCIAL MEDIA RISK ASSESSMENTS

Increasingly, South African employers are using social-media checks as part of background screening. Industry surveys and recruiter reports indicate that **60-80%** of organisations review public profiles (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) to screen for behavioural risks, conflicts of interest, or public-facing reputation issues.



### INTEGRITY ASSESSMENTS

Integrity assessments are increasingly used in South Africa as a proactive tool to gauge honesty, ethical judgement, and fraud risk. These assessments are valued for their predictive power regarding counterproductive and dishonest behaviour.



### SKILLS ASSESSMENTS

Skills assessments are being more widely used in South Africa to improve hiring accuracy and workforce development. The highest adoption is in IT, finance, call centre, and trade roles.

# 05 | Industry Statistics

These statistics highlight key screening result trends based on verification data captured between June 2025 and May 2026, compared to the previous year.

| CHECK                                                                                                         | 2026       | 2025       | CHANGE                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>CRIMINAL RECORDS</b>     | <b>6%</b>  | <b>3%</b>  |  <b>+3%</b>    |
|  <b>DRIVER'S LICENCES</b>   | <b>2%</b>  | <b>11%</b> |  <b>-9%</b>   |
|  <b>FIREARM COMPETENCY</b> | <b>67%</b> | <b>52%</b> |  <b>+15%</b> |
|  <b>CREDIT CHECKS</b>      | <b>13%</b> | <b>17%</b> |  <b>-4%</b>  |

## 06 | iFacts News 2026

# Introducing iFacts Insider V2

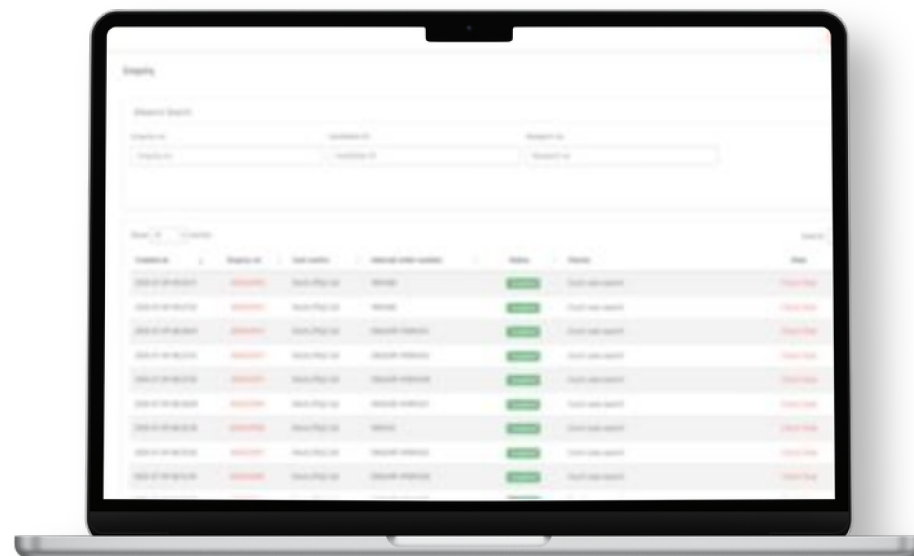
Smarter. Faster. More Intelligent Employee Screening.



### What Is New

iFacts Insider V2 has been developed to meet the growing demands of modern employee screening.

Designed around real client feedback, the new platform delivers a more intuitive user experience while maintaining the highest standards of compliance and security.



#### Faster Processing

Speed without sacrificing quality.

#### Easy to Use

Simple, intuitive interface requiring minimal training.

#### Built for Compliance

Supports POPIA and global privacy requirements.

#### Full Audit Trail

Permission-based access, audit history.

# 07 | What Our Clients Say



Rated **4.9** out of 5 based on Google Reviews

The team is consistently responsive, professional, and easy to work with, and communication has always been clear and efficient.

Their turnaround time was way faster than I had expected.

Their unwavering commitment to excellence and the exceptional service provided by their team is truly unmatched in the industry.

What sets iFacts apart is not just their reliability, but their willingness to consistently go above and beyond.

You're always so quick to respond and ready to assist, no matter how big or small the issue. Your positivity and enthusiasm, especially over the phone, never go unnoticed and always brighten my day.

Went for a police clearance and the ladies were very helpful.

I really appreciate the efforts from you iFacts...well constructed follow-up left me in good spirits.

Excellent service. Very professional. I use them repeatedly.

Their customer service was exceptional and professional

# 08 | Conclusion

## Building Trust. Reducing Risk. **Together.**

The world of work continues to change at an unprecedented pace, and with it, the risks facing organisations are becoming more complex and sophisticated.

This report highlights the critical role that accurate, compliant and technology-driven screening plays in creating safer workplaces, stronger teams and more resilient businesses.

By combining advanced verification capabilities, local expertise and a commitment to innovation, we empower employers to build workforces they can trust.

“  
*Your Trusted Partner in Employee Screening & Vetting*  
”

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



### Screening Protects Your Business

Proactive screening reduces risk, supports compliance and safeguards your reputation.



### People Are Your Greatest Asset

The right people, placed in the right roles, drive performance and long-term success.



### Compliance Is Non-Negotiable

Staying aligned with POPIA and industry regulations in South Africa and globally is essential in today's environment.



### Data Drives Better Decisions

Reliable data and insights enable confident, risk-based hiring decisions.



### Partnership Creates Value

Working with a trusted screening partner ensures consistency, accuracy and peace of mind.