

Home Affairs service down because of SITA mainframe issue

By  Lindsey Schutters

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The Department of Home Affairs issued an [alert to citizens on Thursday](#) stating that its services are disrupted due to a technical problem on the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) mainframe which affects its access to the National Population Register (NPR).



The IBMZ platform leverages AI for the highest security, performance and availability. Source: ibm.com

"We have contacted SITA and have been assured that its technicians and engineers are attending to the matter. We hope that this will not take long to be resolved," said the department, with an apology for any inconvenience caused.

“ The [#DHA](#) wishes to regrettably alert citizens that its services are not available at the moment due to a technical problem on the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) mainframe which affects access to the National Population Register (NPR). pic.twitter.com/MMw48jCdBw— HomeAffairsSA 🇿🇦 (@HomeAffairsSA) [January 4, 2024](#) ”

[SITA issued a tender invitation](#) in February 2022 to upgrade its ageing IBM VMAX-20K storage sub-systems with PowerMax800. The service provider would also be required to train 10 staff members on the configuration so that the agency could be more autonomous in its response to faults.



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The proposed replacement hardware would need to be compatible with IBM System Z technology.

SITA was also [recruiting a mainframe technical manager](#) at the time.

In its [2023-2024 performance plan](#), the agency reported that the "data centre modernisation programme is on track" and that "rationalisation of non-strategic switching and data centres is ongoing".

Modernisation programme enters final phase

The agency also stated that ongoing modernisation of strategic data centre facilities, a key initiative aimed at aligning with industry standards and supporting hyperscale data centre requirements, is entering its final phase.

This initiative, guided by the TIER III+ guidelines and recommendations from the [2020 Presidential Commission on 4IR report](#) produced by Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, then Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, represents a significant step forward in data infrastructure.

Phase 3 of the SITA data modernisation programme will focus on continued upgrading the existing Centurion and Beta data centre facilities. The goal is to achieve a minimum of TIER III standard, a benchmark that measures both design and operation.

ABOUT LINDSEY SCHUTTERS

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