Why Contemporary AI Governance Frameworks Exhibit Structural Inconsistencies and Drift

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(For internal reference and contextual understanding only)

Author: *Shuqin Amberg shuqinamberg@proton.me*
Affiliation: *Independent Researcher, Germany*
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Purpose

This brief provides a descriptive explanation of why contemporary AI governance frameworks tend to exhibit internal inconsistencies, interpretive drift, and reliance on supplemental mechanisms.
It does not propose reforms, prescriptions, or alternative governance models.

1. Object Instability as a Structural Condition

Most AI governance frameworks are required to define a "governance object" (e.g., systems, models, uses, risks, or outcomes) at a stage where that object has not yet stabilized across technical, organizational, and deployment contexts.

As a result, legal and regulatory texts often alternate between multiple referents across sections. This produces internal tension not due to drafting error, but due to the necessity of governing in advance of object stabilization.

2. The Formation of Interpretive Drift

When legal language cannot fully anchor a dynamic object, governance systems naturally rely on interpretive mechanisms such as guidance, discretionary enforcement, and regulatory sandboxes.

Over time, these mechanisms stabilize practice through interpretation rather than through textual consistency.
Governance coherence thus increasingly derives from accumulated practice, rather than from statutory definition.

3. Mitigations Without Structural Resolution

Existing frameworks typically respond through additional documentation, audits, human oversight requirements, or experimental regimes.
These measures mitigate uncertainty but operate under the assumption that the governance object remains fundamentally identifiable.

They therefore function as stabilizing mechanisms, not as structural resolutions of object instability.

4. Governance Limits Under Current Conditions

Under current institutional and technological conditions, enhanced transparency or technical sophistication does not by itself resolve issues of responsibility attribution or semantic stability.

The resulting challenges are not best characterized as technical failures, but as limits of governance reach when responsibility-bearing objects cannot be consistently fixed.

5. The Role of “Black Box” Narratives

Opacity amplifies governance difficulty, but it is not the primary source of drift or inconsistency. Even fully interpretable systems can generate instability where meaning, responsibility, and object boundaries vary across contexts.

Summary

Observed inconsistencies and drift in AI governance are best understood as structural consequences of applying legal language to systems whose governance objects have not yet stabilized.
These effects arise independently of particular policy choices and do not, by themselves, imply regulatory inadequacy or failure.

This brief is intended solely to support internal clarity and interpretability across governance texts and practices. It does not advance normative judgments or policy recommendations.