GLEIF vLEI and “Know Your Agent” explained: how AI agents can prove who they act for

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Short answer: GLEIF CEO Alexandre Kech has argued that the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) and its digital counterpart, the verifiable LEI (vLEI), can give automated markets a shared way to establish who an organisation is and who may act for it, including AI agents, according to XBRL International on 20 November 2026. It matters for accountants because agents are starting to make payments and read business reports, and finance teams will need to verify what an agent is and what it may do.

TL;DR The short version

- GLEIF's CEO argues that the LEI and its digital form, the vLEI, can show who an organisation is and who may act for it, including AI agents.
- Calls for 'Know Your Agent' mechanisms mirror know-your-customer checks for software agents that make payments and read reports.
- It is an argument, not a standard; finance teams can start by listing automated agents that act for them and who authorised each, with what limits.

Read online, listen to it, or change the text size: https://blogs.iictp.org/gleif-vlei-know-your-agent-ai-agents-identity-explained

What are the LEI and vLEI?

The LEI is a global identifier for legal entities. The vLEI is its digital counterpart, which XBRL International says can verify a person’s authority to act for an organisation. This post uses only that description; we did not read GLEIF’s technical specifications.

The argument as reported

- Automation does not guarantee trustworthy information.
- Markets are building digital standards for bonds, trades and payments, and these work best when connected; Kech sees the Global LEI System and vLEI as the shared identity layer that connects them.
- As agents begin to make payments and transactions for companies, systems must check what an agent is, who it acts for and what it is allowed to do.

Know Your Agent

XBRL International notes that the Payment & Clearing Association of China has already called for “Know Your Agent” mechanisms, an analogue of “know your customer” for software agents. The vLEI’s role would be to answer authority questions with a verifiable credential.

Why this matters for reporting

XBRL International adds that as AI agents begin to read and act on business reports, knowing who stands behind the data matters as much as the data itself. Identity and structure are two halves of trust.

Limitations and open questions

- This is an opinion argument summarised by XBRL International, not a standard or a regulation.
- How agent credentials would be issued, revoked and audited is not described in what we read.
- Adoption depends on markets, regulators and software vendors.

What finance teams can do now

1. Inventory automated processes that act on your behalf, such as payment bots and reconciliation agents.
2. Record who authorised each one and with what limits.
3. Ask vendors whether their agents can present verifiable authority.
4. Add agent identity to your control framework and audit evidence.

What it means for accountants and auditors

Delegated authority is a classic control topic, and it now covers software. Read AI agents as intermediaries: identity and accountability and what is least privilege.

Frequently asked questions

- **What is the vLEI?** A digital counterpart of the LEI that can verify a person’s authority to act for an organisation, per XBRL International.
- **What is Know Your Agent?** A call, noted by XBRL International and attributed to a Chinese payments association, for mechanisms to verify AI agents.
- **Is this a rule?** No. It is an argument by GLEIF’s CEO.

Related reading

- AI agents as intermediaries: identity and accountability
- What is least privilege?
- Digital badges and verifiable credentials explained
- AI Practitioner

Sources and currency

Sources were read on 23 November 2026. Products, rules and standards change, so check the linked originals before you rely on any detail.

Related credential: AI Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. XBRL International. GLEIF makes the case for a shared identity layer in digital markets. 20 November 2026. xbrl.org/news/gleif-makes-the-case-for-a-shared-identity-layer-in-digital-markets.

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