



GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT QUARTERS IN MALAYSIA: EVIDENCE FROM AUDITOR GENERAL’S REPORTS (AGR)

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Abstract

Governance determines the utilisation, liveability, and fiscal sustainability of Malaysia’s government quarters, yet recurring weaknesses are consistently highlighted in Auditor General’s Reports (AGRs). This study assesses governance gaps using systematic audit evidence. A total of 608 AGR findings from 2002–2022 were analysed within a six-dimension framework aligned with national asset management policies: Institutional & Administrative, Allocation & Tenancy, Financial, Maintenance & Procurement, Environment, Safety & Facilities, and Monitoring & Recordkeeping. Maintenance and recordkeeping account for over 40% of all findings, reflecting absent preventive maintenance, fragmented registries, weak enforcement, and mismatched allocations. Temporal analysis shows institutional and safety issues were more prevalent under MPAM, while financial and monitoring gaps intensified during the PSPATA era. The study contributes a longitudinal dataset of audit evidence and a federal–state comparative perspective. Policy recommendations include preventive maintenance regimes, integrated quarters registries, and outcome-linked budgeting to enhance the governance of government quarters as strategic public assets.

Keywords: government quarters; governance; Auditor General’s Reports; asset management; Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

Government quarters are government immovable assets that are provided for civil servants, including healthcare personnel, police officers and teachers. The quarters provision is vital in supporting workforce deployment in both urban and rural areas as well as ensuring the livability and well-being of civil servants. Several key frameworks, including Manual Pengurusan Aset Menyeluruh, MPAM (Urus Setia JPAK, 2021a) and the Pelan Strategi Pengurusan Aset Tak Alih, PSPATA (2021–2030) (Urus Setia JPAK, 2021b), are prepared to enhance the governance of government immovable assets, including government quarters. The frameworks emphasize lifecycle-based asset management, preventive maintenance, transparent allocation, and integrated monitoring systems.

Despite the existence of various frameworks, recurring governance challenges persist in managing government quarters, which include underutilisation and mismatched allocations (Zulkanain et al., 2022), weak enforcement (Shahrul Annuar & Sulaiman, 2019), fragmented data (Jaafar et al., 2025), and inadequate maintenance regimes (Simpeh et al., 2023). The highlighted weaknesses prove the gap between formal frameworks and their actual implementation at both federal and state levels.

Hence, the paper aims to examine governance issues in the management of government quarters in Malaysia through a systematic analysis of Auditor General's Reports (AGR) or Laporan Ketua Audit Negara (LKAN) (2002–2022). The outcome of this paper will assess whether current governance practices are adequate to sustain the utilisation, fiscal efficiency and liveability of government quarters while offering evidence-based insights for planning and asset management reforms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Governance in Public Sector Housing

Governance in public sector housing involves institutional arrangements, regulatory frameworks, and accountability mechanisms that influence allocation, maintenance, and utilisation outcomes. Strong governance promotes equitable access, financial sustainability, and safe living conditions, whereas weak governance leads to inefficiencies and deterioration (Muhdiarta, 2025). Frameworks such as MPAM and PSPATA in Malaysia outline the emphasis on lifecycle-based management, preventive maintenance, and evidence-driven planning. Nevertheless, AGRs continuously reveal systemic weaknesses, including outdated records, weak enforcement, mismatched allocations, and poor contractor oversight.

Weak structures, limited resources, and unclear responsibilities were identified as the recurring weaknesses under institutional and administrative dimensions (Mohamad Zam et al., 2025). While Malaysian AGRs reported there

are ongoing issues with enforcement, monitoring, and tenancy management (Bilal et al., 2019), countries with dedicated housing agencies show better results. Aziabah (2018) argues that factors such as adequacy, quality, and affordability are acknowledged as crucial performance indicators. However, issues like fragmented oversight and insufficient accountability are still reported under the governance of various sectors (Shariman et al., 2017).

Singapore's Housing Development Board shows how integrated oversight can be effective, while China's Public Rental Housing reflects the possibilities of governance that brings state, market, and civic actors together (Yan et al., 2020). Meanwhile in Malaysia, AGRs consistently reveal fragmented enforcement and weak tenant management. Learning from other countries is vital, as it helps to address the governance gaps in Malaysia that require systemic reform, particularly in strengthening monitoring, institutional capacity, and stakeholder engagement. In this context, evidence from AGR provides a systematic foundation for advancing reforms in the management of government quarters.

Audit Evidence in Asset Management Research

Mandated under the Audit Act 1957, the Auditor General's Reports (AGR) provide authoritative records of compliance, efficiency and accountability. In comparison to perception-based surveys, AGRs document verifiable governance failures across ministries and states, which make them a powerful and reliable source for longitudinal assessment (Mohamad Azmi & Ismail, 2023). Hence, scholars have progressively used AGRs as an empirical basis to study governance and asset management in Malaysia.

AGRs have been widely employed as evidence to demonstrate recurring governance failures, with several studies concentrating on procurement. For example, Ismail & Md Salleh (2022) on fraud-prone zones, Shariman et al. (2017) on recurring inefficiencies, and Mohamad Azmi & Ismail (2023) on systemic weaknesses and monitoring needs. Beyond procurement, Zahrin & Mohamad (2024) demonstrated how audit certificates and the Financial Management Accountability Index can be used to track accountability trends in local authorities. Collectively, these works underscore the dual role of AGRs, as compliance tools for public accountability and as a critical evidence base for academic inquiry, offering longitudinal insights into systemic governance failures and informing reform agendas in Malaysia's asset management landscape.

Despite the potential in providing systematic evidence on governance gaps across asset lifecycles, AGRs remain underutilised in planning research (Zam et al., 2021). This paper expands the application of audit-based approaches to the governance of government quarters and employs AGR evidence to assess

institutional, operational and policy weaknesses and situates these findings within the national frameworks of MPAM and PSPATA.

Policy and Regulatory Frameworks: MPAM and PSPATA

Malaysia's governance structure for managing immovable assets, including government buildings, is anchored in two key frameworks which are MPAM and PSPATA. PSPATA provides a strategic foundation aimed at professionalising governance through mechanisms such as accrual accounting, value management, and systematic performance measurement. MPAM, on the other hand, introduces the Total Asset Management (TAM) model, which functions as a tactical guide to managing assets across their lifecycle (Urus Setia JPAK, 2021a). Together, these frameworks underscore the importance of sustainability, measurable performance indicators, and lifecycle-based management as essential principles for maximising the value of public assets.

Persistent flaws reveal that these frameworks remain unable to resolve systemic governance challenges. By 2020, nearly one-third of Ministry of Education quarters were either vacant or in deteriorated condition, exposing a stark gap between declared policy objectives and operational realities (Zulkanain et al., 2022). Auditor General's Reports continue to emphasise weak enforcement, disjointed registries, and limited institutional capacity (Mohamed Abu Backer & Wan Yusoff, 2015). Such findings point to structural deficiencies that the framework alone cannot overcome.

The implications for planning are considerable. Vacant units and inadequate upkeep undermine efficient land use, restrict the supply of housing for civil servants, and contribute to less liveable urban environments. Some initiatives, such as adaptive reuse programmes (Jaafar et al., 2025), show a degree of responsiveness. Yet significant structural gaps remain. To ensure that government quarters function as durable and strategically aligned public assets, stronger integration between asset management frameworks and broader planning systems is essential.

Governance Dimensions as an Analytical Framework

Synthesising prior research and AGR evidence, six governance dimensions emerge as critical to understanding weaknesses in the management of government quarters: (i) Allocation & Tenancy, (ii) Environment, Safety & Facilities, (iii) Financial Governance, (iv) Institutional & Administrative Governance, (v) Maintenance & Procurement, and (vi) Monitoring & Recordkeeping. These dimensions reflect the principles embedded in MPAM and PSPATA but remain weakly implemented in practice (Refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Governance Dimensions, Weaknesses, and Policy Alignment

Governance Dimension	Common Weaknesses (examples)	MPAM (2009, revised in 2021)	PSPATA (2021–2030)
(i)Allocation & Tenancy	Inequitable allocation, weak eligibility checks, poor eviction enforcement	Asset utilisation, minimising vacancy	Demand-based allocation, equity, optimisation
(ii)Environment, Safety & Facilities	Safety hazards, poor sanitation, inadequate communal facilities	Service delivery outcomes, asset performance	Safety compliance, liveability, sustainability
(iii)Financial Governance	Underfunded preventive maintenance, weak rent/utility collection	Asset costing, lifecycle budgeting	Outcome-based budgeting, fiscal sustainability
(iv)Institutional & Administrative	Overlapping responsibilities, unclear roles, weak enforcement	Governance structure, role definition	Role clarity, KPI accountability
(v)Maintenance & Procurement	Reactive maintenance, poor contractor oversight, procurement delays	Preventive maintenance emphasis	Procurement efficiency, contractor performance
(vi)Monitoring & Recordkeeping	Fragmented registries, incomplete logs, poor data integration	Asset registers, documentation systems	Digitalisation, integrated data dashboards

Source: Author's coding of LKAN (2002–2022); Adapted from MPAM (2009, revised in 2021) and PSPATA 2021–2030

Allocation & Tenancy

This dimension covers eligibility checks, allocation processes, and tenancy enforcement. AGRs highlight weak demand assessments, incomplete eligibility verification, and inequitable distribution of units. These result in both underutilisation and oversubscription, particularly in rural and urban fringe zones (Zulkanain et al., 2022).

Environment, Safety & Facilities

Concerning the quality of living conditions and the provision of basic amenities. Common issues include sanitation problems, inadequate communal facilities, and unresolved safety hazards, which discourage occupancy and reduce staff welfare (Alias & Mohd Noor, 2025).

Financial Governance

Refers to budgeting practices and rental collection systems. Preventive maintenance budgets are frequently inadequate, rental collection is weak, and

spending remains reactive, compromising fiscal sustainability and long-term asset performance (Breesam & Jawad, 2021).

Institutional & Administrative Governance

Covers role clarity, coordination, and enforcement across levels. AGRs report overlapping mandates, unclear responsibilities, and weak enforcement, which delay decision-making and reduce accountability (Tajudin et al., 2022).

Maintenance & Procurement

Relates to upkeep and contractor management. Maintenance remains reactive, contractor oversight is weak, and procurement processes are delayed, contributing to deteriorating living conditions (Simpeh et al., 2023).

Monitoring & Recordkeeping

Covers asset documentation and data systems. Registries are fragmented, logs incomplete, and data integration across agencies remains poor, restricting evidence-based planning and timely interventions (Hauashdh et al., 2020).

Despite the lifecycle, equity, and performance principles expressed in MPAM and PSPATA, AGRs over two decades demonstrate that policy intent has not effectively implemented. For planners and policymakers, these recurring weaknesses threaten the efficiency, occupancy, and liveability of government quarters, underscoring the need for integrated reform that aligns asset management with planning systems.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study undertakes a qualitative analysis of the Auditor General's Reports (AGR) from 2002 to 2022. Under the Audit Act of 1957, the AGRs are mandated to provide independent evaluations of operational performance, financial management, and compliance across ministries and state agencies. Their accessibility and consistency over the past two decades make them a valuable dataset for examining governance issues in the management of government quarters.

From AGR Series 1, 2, and 3, a total of 608 audit findings were extracted, covering both federal and state levels. The absence of findings in certain years reflects the scope of the audit rather than the absence of governance problems. Each finding was classified into six governance dimensions (refer to Table 1) in line with the principles of MPAM and PSPATA.

The data were analysed using descriptive frequencies and cross-tabulations to illustrate distribution by government level, year, and governance

dimension. To trace shifts in emphasis over time, comparisons were also drawn across three policy phases: Pre-MPAM, MPAM, and PSPATA (see Table 2).

Table 2: Dataset and Coding Framework

Variable	Description	Categories / Examples
Year	Year of the Auditor General's Report (AGR) in which the issue was recorded	2002–2022 (coverage varies)
Government Level	Government tier where the issue was identified	Federal / State
Governance Dimension	Six categories developed from AGR analysis and mapped to MPAM and PSPATA	Allocation & Tenancy; Environment, Safety & Facilities; Financial; Institutional & Administrative; Maintenance & Procurement; Monitoring & Recordkeeping
Key Issue	Thematic label summarising the specific problem	e.g., Weak traceability, Absent preventive maintenance, Fragmented registries

Source: Author's coding of AGR (2002–2022).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Dataset Overview and Governance Distribution

This study analysed 608 audit findings on government quarters from the Auditor General's Reports (2002–2022). Audit coverage was uneven, with some years absent (2003–2005, 2007–2008, 2016, and 2020) due to shifting audit priorities rather than the absence of governance problems (refer to Figure 1). Peaks in reporting, such as 2010, 2014, and 2018, reflect periods when quarters management came under closer scrutiny. By government level, federal agencies accounted for slightly more than half of the findings (56%), while state governments contributed 44%, indicating that weaknesses in quarters governance are systemic rather than confined to one tier.

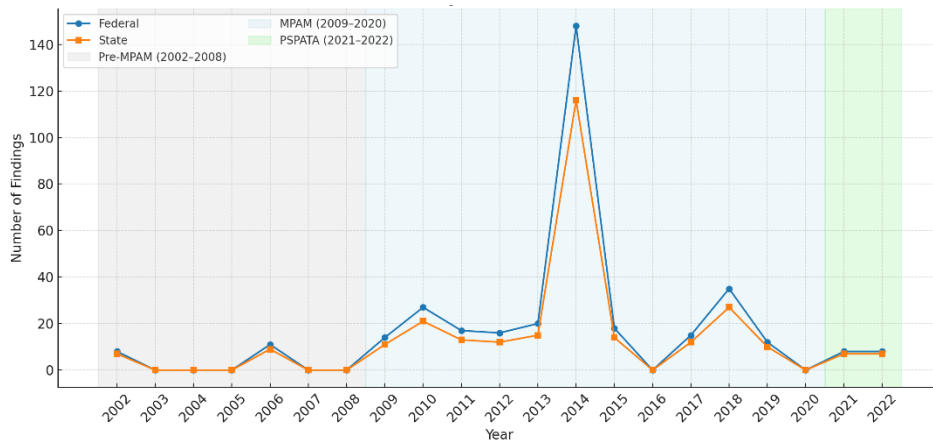


Figure 1: Federal vs State Audit Findings in Government Quarters (2002–2022).
Source: LKAN (2002-2022) & Author's Calculation

As shown in Table 3, governance failures were most concentrated in Maintenance & Procurement and Monitoring & Recordkeeping, which together account for more than 40% of all findings. These reveal persistent reliance on reactive maintenance, weak contractor oversight, and fragmented asset registries. Institutional and Financial Governance issues together form a second tier, about one-third of findings, pointing to structural inefficiencies and fiscal shortfalls. Finally, Allocation & Tenancy and Environment, Safety & Facilities account for smaller shares but remain important, as mismatched allocation and poor living conditions directly undermine occupancy and liveability.

Table 3: Distribution of Governance Issues by Dimension (2002–2022)

Governance Dimension	F	%	Key Weaknesses
Maintenance & Procurement	131	21.5	Absence of preventive maintenance, weak contractor oversight
Monitoring & Recordkeeping	117	19.2	Outdated logs, fragmented registries
Institutional & Administrative	97	16.0	Role ambiguity, weak enforcement
Financial Governance	95	15.6	Inadequate budgets, poor payment systems
Allocation & Tenancy	92	15.1	Mismatched allocation, weak eligibility
Environment, Safety & Facilities	76	12.5	Structural defects, poor sanitation
Total	608	100.0	

Source: Author's coding of LKAN (2002–2022)

Collectively, these patterns suggest that technical breakdowns in maintenance and data governance dominate quarters management, while institutional and financial weaknesses hinder long-term sustainability. At the same time, gaps in allocation and environmental quality affect demand, leaving many units underutilised despite acute housing needs.

Temporal Trends and Policy Periods

The analysis of 608 audit findings highlights fluctuations in governance weaknesses across 2002–2022 (refer to Table 4). Audit attention was uneven, with major peaks in 2010, 2014, and 2018, reflecting cycles when quarters management became a focal area of scrutiny. By contrast, several years yielded few findings, indicating variations in audit coverage rather than the absence of governance problems.

Table 4: Distribution of Findings by Year and Governance Dimension (2002–2022)

Governance Dimension	Pre-MPAM		MPAM										PSPATA		Total
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Maintenance & Procurement	5	1	5	10	8	5	10	45	7	7	13	15	0	0	131
Monitoring & Recordkeeping	3	3	3	8	7	3	3	36	6	9	18	5	4	9	117
Institutional & Administrative	1	0	0	10	10	4	1	53	5	5	3	4	1	0	97
Financial Governance	2	2	1	8	9	3	0	45	2	2	12	0	4	5	95
Allocation & Tenancy	0	6	0	5	4	5	1	42	1	11	11	0	1	5	92
Environment, Safety & Facilities	1	0	0	7	7	6	0	43	4	1	5	2	0	0	76
Total	12	12	9	48	45	26	15	264	25	35	62	26	10	19	608

Source: LKAN (2002–2022) & Author's Calculation

Aggregating the results into three policy periods (Pre-MPAM, MPAM, and PSPATA) reveals distinct emphases. During the MPAM years (2009–2020), audit findings were disproportionately concentrated in Institutional &

Administrative governance (+2.5) and Environment, Safety & Facilities (+2.4). This pattern suggests that although MPAM sought to institutionalise lifecycle governance, implementation lagged: coordination remained fragmented, and quarters continued to face liveability and safety issues. In effect, MPAM’s design addressed “what should be done” but agencies struggled with “how to do it.”

By contrast, the PSPATA era (2021–2022) was dominated by Monitoring & Recordkeeping (+3.6) and Financial Governance (+2.3). This shift reflects PSPATA’s strategic emphasis on fiscal accountability, digital registries, and performance indicators. However, the over-representation of these categories may indicate that PSPATA is stronger in setting reporting and compliance requirements than in addressing operational realities such as preventive maintenance. The significant under-representation of Maintenance & Procurement (–2.9) is likely due to narrowed audit focus rather than genuine improvement, raising concern that persistent maintenance problems may be under-diagnosed.

Table 5: Distribution of Governance Dimensions Across Policy Periods
 (Residual Analysis)

Governance Dimension	Pre-MPAM (2002–2008)	MPAM Period (2009–2020)	PSPATA Era (2021–2022)
Allocation & Tenancy Governance	—	—	—
Environment, Safety & Facilities	—	Over-represented (+2.4)	Under-represented (–2.1)
Financial Governance	—	Under-represented (–1.9)	Over-represented (+2.3)
Institutional & Administrative	—	Over-represented (+2.5)	Under-represented (–1.9)
Maintenance & Procurement	—	Slightly over (+1.9)	Under-represented (–2.9)
Monitoring & Recordkeeping	—	Under-represented (–3.2)	Over-represented (+3.6)

Note. Only residuals exceeding ±1.96 are reported. Positive values indicate over-representation relative to expected counts; negative values indicate under-representation. Blank cells (—) indicate no statistically significant deviation. Source: Author’s calculation

A chi-square test confirmed a statistically significant association between governance dimension and policy period, $\chi^2(10, N=608) = 35.45$, $p < .001$, with a small-to-moderate effect size (Cramér’s $V = 0.171$).

Table 6: Chi-Square Test of Independence Between Governance
 Dimension and Policy Period

Test Statistic	Value	df	N	p-value	Effect Size (Cramér's V)
Pearson χ^2	35.45	10	608	< .001	0.171

Note. The chi-square test was significant, indicating that the distribution of governance issues varied across policy periods. Cramér's $V = 0.171$ suggests a small-to-moderate association. Source: Author's calculation

These temporal shifts suggest that policy frameworks shape the audit lens but have not resolved underlying weaknesses. MPAM-era audits exposed coordination and liveability failures, while PSPATA-era audits highlight fiscal and recordkeeping gaps. Both reflect partial implementation: rules and frameworks evolve, but operational capacity, enforcement, and demand alignment remain unresolved. For planners, this underlines the need for governance reforms that go beyond compliance reporting to ensure sustainable liveability and utilisation of government quarters.

Federal–State Comparisons

At the descriptive level, federal audits accounted for a slightly larger share of governance issues (56%) compared to state audits (44%). Maintenance & Procurement was the most frequent dimension across both tiers, but notable contrasts emerged in other areas. Institutional & Administrative and Environment, Safety & Facilities findings were disproportionately federal, while Monitoring & Recordkeeping was more common in state audits. Allocation & Tenancy was relatively balanced, reflecting persistent mismatches between tenant demand and quarters suitability at both levels.

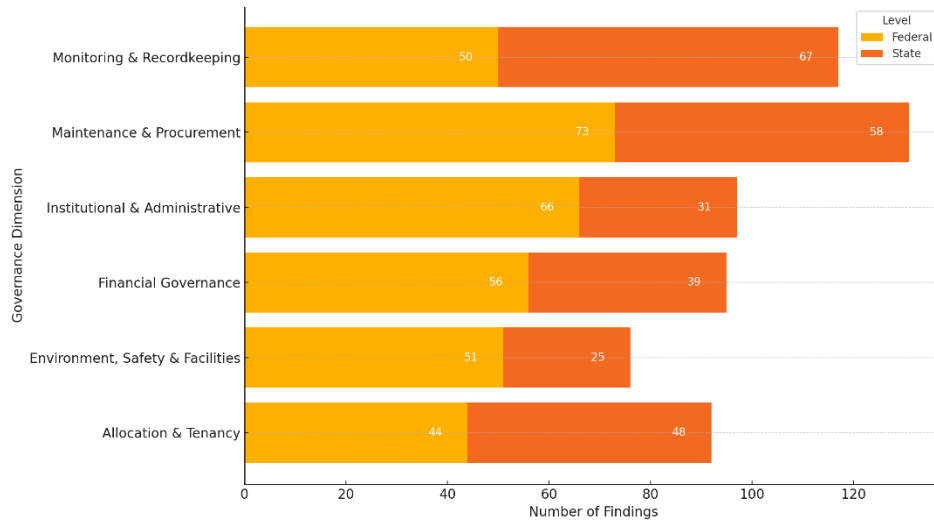


Figure 2: Federal vs State Distribution across Governance Dimensions
Source: LKAN (2002-2022) & Author's Calculation

Inferential analysis confirmed these contrasts ($\chi^2(5, N = 608) = 20.69$, $p < .001$, Cramér's $V = 0.184$). Monitoring & Recordkeeping was significantly over-represented at the state level, while Institutional & Administrative and Environment, Safety & Facilities were significantly federal-dominant.

Table 7: Chi-Square Test of Independence Between Governance Dimension and Government Level

Test Statistic	Value	df	N	p-value	Effect Size (Cramér's V)
Pearson χ^2	20.69	5	608	< .001	0.184

Source: & Author's Calculation

These patterns reflect structural differences in capacity. At the federal level, coordination failures stem from overlapping mandates, role ambiguity, and weak enforcement mechanisms, which echo broader critiques of Malaysia's administrative fragmentation (Tajudin et al., 2022). Safety-related deficiencies are also more visible at the federal level, where higher-profile agencies and centralised facilities attract greater audit scrutiny. At the state level, monitoring weaknesses are linked to limited technical capacity, fragmented databases, and reliance on manual record-keeping, consistent with earlier findings that subnational agencies struggle with asset registries and data integration (Shariman et al., 2017).

These results suggest that governance weaknesses are tier specific. Federal agencies require reforms that strengthen compliance, role delineation, and enforcement capacity, while states need investment in ICT systems, digital asset registries, and technical training to improve monitoring. Financial governance weaknesses remain relevant across both tiers, indicating that fiscal sustainability requires coordinated reform. For planners, this highlights that policy solutions cannot be uniform: differentiated strategies are necessary to address the distinct institutional and technical gaps faced at federal and state levels.

Key Issues Across Dimensions

Analysis of issue-level findings reveals that governance weaknesses in government quarters are not evenly distributed but cluster around a narrow set of recurring problems that cut across dimensions. Table 8 highlights that while each governance dimension records deficiencies, most findings are concentrated in monitoring and recordkeeping, maintenance failures, and institutional enforcement

Table 8: Key Governance Issues in Government Quarters Management (2002–2022)

Governance Dimension	Key Issues (KI)	Freq.	%	Total %
Maintenance & Procurement Governance	Absence of preventive maintenance frameworks	51	8.4	21.6
	Deficient maintenance contract oversight & contractor performance	42	6.9	
	Poor maintenance quality	38	6.3	
Monitoring & Recordkeeping	Weak traceability and outdated logs	63	10.4	19.3
	Fragmented registry & asset information systems	54	8.9	
Institutional & Administrative Governance	Lack of policy enforcement and compliance	55	9.0	15.9
	Fragmented oversight, unclear mandates & weak coordination	36	5.9	
	Underqualified staffing and ineligible appointments	6	1.0	
Financial Governance	Ineffective ITP & BSH payment management	42	6.9	15.6
	Inadequate maintenance budgets	33	5.4	
	Inefficient utility bill payment management	20	3.3	

Governance Dimension	Key Issues (KI)	Freq.	%	Total %
Allocation & Tenancy Governance	Mismatch between tenant demand and quarters suitability	32	5.3	15.1
	Insufficient occupancy certification protocols	24	3.9	
	Weak eligibility verification & tenancy approval	22	3.6	
	Poor eviction enforcement	14	2.3	
Environment, Safety & Facilities	Poor building structural integrity, safety, and sanitation conditions	40	6.6	12.5
	Neglected upkeep of site amenities and grounds	36	5.9	
Total		608	100.0	100.0

Source: LKAN (2002–2022), Author's Calculation

A closer synthesis of these findings indicates that five structural bottlenecks underpin most governance failures:

Data and Monitoring Deficits (Monitoring & Recordkeeping)

Weak traceability (10.4%) and fragmented registries (8.9%) form the single largest cluster of issues. These deficiencies undermine evidence-based planning, lifecycle costing, and accountability, reflecting the persistent absence of integrated asset information systems. Internationally, asset management studies stress that without reliable registries, preventive strategies remain ineffective (Aziabah, 2018).

Enforcement and Institutional Weaknesses (Institutional & Administrative Governance)

Lack of compliance (9.0%) and fragmented oversight (5.9%) highlight persistent enforcement gaps. These issues point to role ambiguity and overlapping mandates between agencies, consistent with broader literature on institutional fragmentation in public sector housing (Tajudin et al., 2022).

Maintenance Failures (Maintenance & Procurement Governance)

Preventive frameworks remain absent (8.4%), contractor performance oversight is weak (6.9%), and maintenance quality is poor (6.3%). This cluster underscores reliance on reactive repairs rather than lifecycle-based maintenance, a pattern widely reported in public housing systems (Simpeh et al., 2023).

Financial Inefficiencies (Financial Governance)

Ineffective payment systems (6.9%) and inadequate budgets (5.4%) reveal structural fiscal bottlenecks. These constraints limit the ability to plan long-term maintenance and create dependency on complaint-based expenditure. Prior research similarly links underfunding and rigid budgeting to declining stock conditions (Breesam & Jawad, 2021).

Allocation Mismatches (Allocation & Tenancy Governance)

Weak eligibility checks (3.6%) and mismatches between demand and quarters suitability (5.3%) continue to undermine utilisation. Such inefficiencies not only waste resources but also reduce occupancy satisfaction, echoing findings on misaligned allocation mechanisms in civil service housing (Zhang et al., 2022).

These recurrent issues demonstrate that quarters management in Malaysia is undermined not by isolated operational lapses, but by structural governance bottlenecks: unreliable information systems, weak enforcement, reactive maintenance, fiscal mismanagement, and allocation inefficiencies. Addressing these bottlenecks requires integrated reforms that strengthen institutional authority, modernise asset registries, and embed preventive lifecycle practices within financing and maintenance regimes.

Implications for Governance and Asset Management

The concentration of issues across monitoring, maintenance, and institutional enforcement has three major implications for quarters governance:

Planning and Demand Alignment

Persistent mismatches between quarters provision and tenant demand highlight the need for evidence-based planning, a principle embedded in PSPATA's emphasis on demand-based allocation and optimisation. Integrating workforce demographics, civil servants deployment patterns, and regional housing needs into planning cycles would reduce underutilisation and ensure resources are aligned with actual demand.

Policy and Institutional Reforms

The over-representation of institutional weaknesses at the federal level points to gaps in role clarity, compliance, and coordination, which MPAM identifies as core governance functions. Without stronger enforcement mechanisms and clearer delineation of responsibilities across federal, state, and district levels, institutional fragmentation will continue to undermine governance. Aligning these reforms with MPAM's prescribed structures and PSPATA's accountability frameworks would improve oversight and reduce duplication.

Asset Management Practices

The prevalence of reactive maintenance directly contradicts MPAM and PSPATA's lifecycle-based principles of preventive maintenance and outcome-driven asset management. To operationalise these principles, agencies must move beyond complaint-driven repairs by embedding preventive regimes, linking budgets to performance outcomes, and developing interoperable digital registries. Such steps would fulfil PSPATA's digitalisation agenda and institutionalise MPAM's total asset management approach.

CONCLUSION

This study examined 608 Auditor General's Report (AGR) findings on the management of government quarters in Malaysia between 2002 and 2022. The analysis confirms that weaknesses are systemic and recurring, with monitoring, enforcement, maintenance, and financial governance remaining unresolved despite the adoption of MPAM and PSPATA. Temporal variation showed institutional and safety issues were more prominent during MPAM, while financial and recordkeeping weaknesses have become dominant under PSPATA. Federal-state contrasts further revealed that federal agencies struggle with enforcement and role clarity, whereas state governments face greater difficulties with monitoring and recordkeeping systems.

The results highlight that governance gaps are concentrated in a narrow set of issues: outdated registries, fragmented oversight, absence of preventive maintenance, weak financial systems, and mismatched allocations. These findings suggest that the lifecycle-based and performance-driven principles of MPAM and PSPATA are not yet institutionalised in practice. Strengthening digital asset registries, preventive maintenance regimes, fiscal accountability, and demand-based allocation are therefore essential for improving the liveability and sustainability of government quarters.

As quarters continue to serve as strategic public assets for civil servants, further studies should extend this analysis across other sectors and compare Malaysia's approaches with international models to guide more effective reforms.

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APPENDIX I: Coverage of Auditor General's Reports (2002–2022)

No	Audited Year	AGR/LKAN Report Title
1	2002	Laporan Ketua Audit Negara Negeri Pahang 2002
2	2006	Aktiviti dan Kajian Khas Jabatan/Agensi Negeri Pulau Pinang 2006
3	2009	Aktiviti Kementerian/Jabatan dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Persekutuan
4	2010	Aktiviti Kementerian/Jabatan dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Persekutuan
5	2010	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Sarawak Tahun 2010
6	2010	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Terengganu Tahun 2010
7	2011	Aktiviti Kementerian/Jabatan dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Persekutuan
8	2012	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Pahang Siri 1 2012
9	2013	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Sabah Siri 2 2013
10	2014	Aktiviti Kementerian/Jabatan Dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Persekutuan Siri 1, 2, 3
11	2014	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Perak Siri 3 2014
12	2015	Aktiviti Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Sarawak Siri 1 2015
13	2017	Pengurusan Aktiviti/Kewangan Jabatan/Agensi dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Pulau Pinang Siri 1 2017
14	2018	Pengurusan Aktiviti Jabatan dan Pengurusan Syarikat Kerajaan Negeri Johor Siri 2 2018
15	2019	Aktiviti Kementerian/Jabatan Kerajaan Persekutuan dan Badan Berkanun Persekutuan Siri 2
16	2021	Pengauditan Pematuhan Kementerian dan Jabatan Persekutuan
17	2022	Penyata Kewangan Kerajaan Negeri dan Agensi Negeri Serta Pengauditan Pematuhan Jabatan/Agensi Negeri Selangor Tahun 2022