


Legal Accountability of Land Deed Officials for Issuing Land Transfer Deeds Using Fraudulent *Modus Operandi*

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Received : August 13, 2025

Revised : September 10, 2025

Accepted : December 09, 2025

Online : December 30, 2025

Abstract

The Land Deed Official (PPAT) plays a crucial role in ensuring the validity of land rights transfers by issuing authentic deeds. However, in practice, this authority can be abused through fraudulent *modus operandi* that employ such deeds as instruments of criminal acts, as illustrated by the land mafia case involving Mbah Tupon. The legal issues that arise include the juridical accountability of PPATs involved in issuing land transfer deeds through fraudulent *modus operandi*, as well as the effectiveness of supervisory and guidance mechanisms in preventing similar practices. This study aims to analyse the forms of PPAT accountability from the perspectives of civil, criminal, and administrative law, as well as to examine the ideal models of supervision and guidance for preventing land mafia practices. The research method employed is normative juridical with statutory, conceptual, and case study approaches, linking land law norms with the professional ethics of PPATs. The results of the study indicate that PPATs involved in fraudulent *modus operandi* may be held cumulatively liable under all three legal regimes. However, weaknesses in internal supervision systems and the lack of strict administrative sanctions remain loopholes that allow such violations to occur. Reforming supervision policies, strengthening the role of the PPAT Supervisory Council, and digitising the deed-making process are strategic measures to prevent abuse of authority and provide effective legal protection for landowners.

Keywords: PPAT, Juridical Accountability, Fraudulent Modus Operandi, Land Mafia, Professional Supervision.

INTRODUCTION

Land Registration Officers (PPAT) are public officials appointed by the state to draw up authentic deeds relating to certain legal actions concerning land rights or apartment ownership rights (Alsam & Damayanti, 2020). The deeds drawn up by PPATs form the basis for the registration of transfer of rights at the land office (Rasda et al., 2021), thus placing PPATs as an important part of the legal protection mechanism in the land sector.

The validity of PPAT deeds as authentic deeds provides perfect evidentiary power, making them a mainstay in maintaining order in land administration (Ardiansyah et al., 2022). However, despite their highly strategic role, PPATs' authority is often abused, especially in cases involving land mafia practices.

In some cases, PPATs have become part of a *modus operandi* of fraud that leads to illegal land grabbing. The case involving Mbah Tupon in Yogyakarta, for example, shows how PPAT deeds, which are supposed to be a legal protection tool, are instead used to facilitate criminal acts (DetikJogja Team, 2025; Tempo Team, 2025). Deeds of transfer of rights were still issued despite indications of identity fraud, indicating weaknesses in the material verification carried out by PPATs, as well as the possibility of collusion between PPATs and land mafia actors.

The Mbah Tupon case is not the only example of PPAT abuse of authority. Similar cases have occurred in various other regions in Indonesia, where PPATs have been involved in facilitating land

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transactions involving false identities and document forgery. Therefore, this case illustrates a broader pattern of PPAT deed abuse and should be seen as part of a larger system in which the supervision of PPATs has not been effective in detecting and preventing increasingly structured land mafia practices.

This study aims to explore in greater depth the legal responsibility of PPATs in issuing land transfer deeds used in fraudulent *modus operandi*, as well as to design a more effective supervision and guidance model to prevent land mafia practices. In this analysis, we use the lens of public accountability theory, which relates to the obligation of public officials to act in accordance with applicable legal and ethical norms (Limbong et al., 2022). Specifically, this study adopts a cumulative accountability approach, which combines the criminal, civil, and administrative dimensions of PPAT responsibility.

With this approach, we will assess how each PPAT violation can be sanctioned in these three legal domains, which have not been widely discussed in previous studies. This study will also explain why supervision of PPATs is still weak by identifying gaps in the existing supervision system.

The existing oversight system tends to be reactive and inadequate in preventing violations from the outset, and administrative sanctions against violating PPATs are often not applied consistently (Hehanussa et al., 2023; Paramadani & Rubiati, 2020). In this regard, this study proposes a risk-based oversight model and the use of technology to detect suspicious transactions early on. In addition, we will design a monitoring model that integrates regulatory updates, institutional strengthening, and the use of more modern verification technologies.

The research questions posed in this study are: What form does the legal accountability of PPATs take in the issuance of land transfer deeds used in fraudulent *modus operandi*, and what kind of ideal monitoring and guidance model needs to be implemented to prevent land mafia practices?

This study makes an important contribution to strengthening the concept of public official accountability in the land sector through a cumulative accountability approach for PPATs in these three legal domains. Normatively, this study identifies weaknesses in the regulation and implementation of PPAT supervision and offers a supervisory model that combines regulatory reform, institutional strengthening, and the use of modern verification technology. In terms of policy, the results of this study form the basis for formulating a more effective PPAT professional supervision strategy to prevent abuse of authority and eradicate land mafia practices.

Overall, this article aims to strengthen the role of PPAT as the guardian of legal certainty in the land sector, while increasing the effectiveness of land rights protection in Indonesia, given the increasingly complex threats from growing land mafia practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Normative Position of PPAT and the Function of Authentic Deeds in the Land Registration System

Academic studies on PPAT generally begin with a discussion of the normative position and function of PPAT deeds as legal instruments in land registration. Alsam and Damayanti (2020) emphasise that PPAT deeds are authentic deeds as regulated in the Civil Code, which have full probative force. These deeds are not merely administrative documents, but binding evidence and the basis for the registration of transfer of rights at the land office. This view is reinforced by Rasda et al. (2021), who see PPAT as the “initial guardian” of legal certainty in land matters. In other words, before the ministry or land office records the transfer, the PPAT ensures that the legal actions taken by the parties have met the formal legal requirements. Ardiansyah et al. (2022) add that every deed issued by the PPAT always carries legal responsibility because the deed serves as

preliminary evidence that determines the formation of a new legal relationship related to land rights.

This literature forms the theoretical basis that PPAT exercises attributive authority, which is limited by legal norms and cannot be interpreted broadly. Therefore, errors or abuses in the preparation of deeds are not only administrative in nature but also have a direct impact on the validity of land rights and potential disputes.

Integrity, Material Verification, and Accountability of PPAT

The second theme that emerges strongly in the literature is the integrity and accountability of PPAT in exercising its authority. [Rasda et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasise that integrity is a key prerequisite because PPAT deeds only have legal legitimacy if the PPAT conducts a careful verification process of the parties and the land object. This shows that the accountability of PPATs does not only depend on written norms, but also on the moral quality and professionalism of PPATs.

[Ardiansyah et al. \(2022\)](#) expand the analysis by pointing out that every PPAT deed has binding legal consequences, so that negligence or illegal actions can lead to criminal, civil, or administrative liability. [Limbong et al. \(2022\)](#) emphasise that the obligation of material verification is central to the PPAT profession. Verification should not be limited to checking the completeness of administrative documents, but must include validation of the material truth of the statements and identities of the parties, which theoretically depends on the principle of due diligence.

From a public administration theory perspective, the literature on PPAT integrity is related to the theory of public accountability, as proposed by [Bovens \(2007\)](#), which emphasises the obligation of public officials to act in accordance with legal norms, ethics, and the public interest. In this context, PPAT accountability is directly related to their responsibility to ensure the validity of all documents they issue in relation to land rights. On the other hand, from a legal perspective, PPAT accountability is related to the doctrine of *onus probandi*, the principle of prudence, and the principle of legal certainty as regulated in the Restatement (Second) of Torts, which states that errors in evidence collection or verification can lead to legal liability.

PPAT Supervision: Structural Weaknesses and Institutional Challenges

Weaknesses in PPAT supervision are a major theme in the literature. [Paramadani and Rubiati \(2020\)](#) show that the PPAT Supervisory Board has not performed its supervisory function effectively due to a lack of periodic evaluations, a weak coaching system, and a mismatch between normative supervisory mechanisms and practices in the field.

This study shows that PPAT supervision has failed in three main aspects: (1) early detection failure; (2) prevention failure; and (3) enforcement failure. This analysis is in line with the theory of *regulatory enforcement* developed by [Kagan and Scholz \(1984\)](#), which states that effective supervision must include consistent detection, prevention, and enforcement mechanisms. In this context, weaknesses in supervision indicate a gap between existing regulations and their implementation in the field. These institutional weaknesses show that PPAT accountability is not only a matter of personal integrity but also a systemic issue involving regulatory weaknesses, insufficient supervisory resources, and the absence of a digital system capable of performing multi-layered verification.

PPAT and Land Mafia Practices: Modus Operandi and Patterns of Violations

A number of studies have revealed the involvement of PPAT in land mafia practices. [Hehanussa et al. \(2023\)](#) show that the strategic position of PPAT is often exploited by land mafia syndicates through identity fraud, document forgery, or direct collusion with PPAT to facilitate illegal transfers of rights.

This study shows that PPAT deeds become a legalisation tool for illegal actions. Empirical findings from investigations by the [Tempo Team \(2025\)](#) and the [DetikJogja Team \(2025\)](#) related to the Mbah Tupon case reinforce this argument. Despite indications of identity fraud, the deed of transfer of rights was still issued, indicating weak verification and the alleged involvement of PPAT.

This case illustrates that PPATs can be an “internal threat” in land crimes. From a criminological perspective, this phenomenon can be explained through the theory of opportunity-based crime proposed by [Cohen and Felson \(1979\)](#), which states that crime occurs when there is an opportunity, a perpetrator, and a vulnerable target. PPATs in the context of land mafia can become “opportunity providers” because their legal authority allows crimes to be facilitated legally.

Legal Protection and the Urgency of PPAT Supervision Reform

The literature also highlights the importance of supervisory reform to strengthen legal protection in the land sector. [Widiarty \(2024\)](#) emphasises that legal protection for the community is only effective if PPATs exercise their authority professionally and in accordance with legal provisions. A strong supervisory system is believed to close loopholes for abuse of authority and increase public trust.

This study is in line with the theory of good governance proposed by [Grindle \(2007\)](#), which states that the delivery of public services must be based on the principles of transparency, accountability, integrity, and effective oversight. In the context of land, PPAT oversight is an integral component of land-based public service delivery. Oversight reforms that prioritise these principles can be an important step in closing loopholes for abuse of authority and preventing land mafia practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilises a normative or doctrinal legal research method, which focuses on analysing positive legal norms, legal principles, and legal doctrines relevant to the issue under review, namely the legal responsibility and supervision of Land Deed Officials (PPAT) in the issuance of land transfer deeds used in fraud and land mafia practices ([Marzuki, 2017](#); [Ibrahim, 2012](#); [Widiarty, 2024](#)). Within this normative research framework, law is viewed as rules contained in legislation, court decisions, and academic doctrines, rather than as empirical social phenomena ([Soekanto & Mamudji, 2011](#)).

Research Approach

In accordance with the nature of normative legal research, the approach used includes several interrelated methods to answer research questions regarding the legal accountability of PPATs in issuing deeds of transfer of rights used in fraudulent *modus operandi* and evaluating effective supervision models.

1. Statutory Approach is carried out by systematically reviewing the laws and regulations governing the authority, duties, and responsibilities of PPATs and the land registration system. This analysis includes: Temporal Scope: This study will cover regulations in force since the last amendment in 2016, reviewing relevant legal developments to date. The selection of these regulations aims to cover important changes that affect the supervision of PPATs, including the implementation of the latest regulations.
 - a) Law No. 5 of 1960 concerning Basic Agrarian Principles (UUPA) as the main legal basis related to land.
 - b) Government Regulation No. 24 of 1997 concerning Land Registration, as well as its implementing regulations governing the procedures for registering land rights.
 - c) Government Regulation No. 37 of 1998 concerning Regulations on the Position of Land

- Deed Officers, amended by Government Regulation No. 24 of 2016, as well as other related regulations governing the authority and supervision of PPATs.
- d) Regulations of the Minister of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning/Head of the National Land Agency on guidance and supervision of PPAT, as well as Regulations of the Head of the National Land Agency on the cancellation of land deeds and certificates.
 2. Conceptual Approach is used to analyse concepts, principles, and doctrines related to PPAT accountability, including the principles of *legal certainty*, *justice*, *public trust*, and *public official accountability*. These principles will be explained with reference to relevant doctrinal and theoretical sources:
 - a) Principle of Legal Certainty: Explained with reference to the theory of *legal certainty* by [Hart \(1961\)](#), which emphasises the need for clear legal norms that can be applied consistently.
 - b) Principle of Accountability: Using the theory of *public accountability* proposed by [Bovens \(2007\)](#), which views accountability as the obligation of public officials to act in accordance with legal and ethical norms.
 - c) Principle of Justice and Protection of Rights: Referring to [Rawls' \(1971\)](#) theory of distributive justice, which emphasises the distribution of social justice that includes the protection of the rights of vulnerable parties in land transactions.
 3. The case approach is carried out by analysing court decisions and case documents related to the abuse of authority by PPATs in land mafia practices, including the case of Mbah Tupon in Yogyakarta. This analysis aims to examine how judges interpret and apply legal norms to PPATs involved in fraud, forgery, or civil law violations. The criteria for selecting court decisions to be analysed are: The number of decisions to be analysed is around 5-10 relevant decisions.
 - a) Landmark Cases: Cases that include important decisions regarding the responsibility of PPATs and the application of sanctions for the misuse of authentic deeds.
 - b) Cases Involving PPATs: Includes cases that show the involvement of PPATs in fraud or legal violations that harm third parties.
 - c) Time Frame: Decisions issued in the last two decades, with a focus on the period after the 2016 amendment to the PPAT regulations.
 4. Historical Approach is used to trace the development of PPAT authority and the land registration system in Indonesia, from the colonial period to the national agrarian legal regime. The focus is on: The historical phase to be selected is the post-1960 period, with particular attention to post-UUPA reforms and their impact on PPAT authority.
 - a) Colonial Agrarian Law Phase: Developing an initial understanding of land management and the position of officials involved in land administration.
 - b) Post-Independence Phase: Tracing changes in the land registration system after the issuance of the UUPA in 1960, up to the latest reforms in the Indonesian land system.
 5. Limited Comparative Approach limited comparative approach is used to compare PPAT supervision practices in Indonesia with countries that have adopted modern land registration systems. The countries to be analysed include: This analysis aims to examine the possibility of adopting a more effective and technology-based PPAT supervision model from these two countries.

Singapore and Australia: These two countries have more modern electronic land registration systems and stricter supervision of land deed officials. These countries were chosen because they have more advanced systems in terms of transparency and land material verification.

Types and Sources of Legal Materials

The legal materials used in this study consist of:

1. Primary Legal Materials: These include legislation, court decisions, and official documents related to PPAT, the land registration system, and the supervision of the PPAT profession.
2. Secondary Legal Materials: Books on legal research methodology (Ibrahim, 2012; Marzuki, 2017; Widiarty, 2024) and agrarian law literature, as well as scientific journal articles on PPAT, land mafia, and public official accountability.
3. Tertiary Legal Materials: Legal dictionaries, the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), and legal encyclopaedias to clarify legal terms used in the research.

Methods of Legal Interpretation and Analysis

The analysis of legal materials was conducted using qualitative analysis methods. The legal norms and doctrines obtained were analysed and interpreted systematically, logically, and argumentatively. Legal interpretation is carried out using methods commonly used in Indonesian legal doctrine, including:

1. Grammatical Interpretation: Interpreting provisions based on the meaning of the language used in the regulation.
2. Systematic Interpretation: Connecting articles in the same or related regulations.
3. Historical Interpretation: Tracing the intent behind the formation of norms and the background of regulations.
4. Teleological Interpretation: Interpreting norms based on the objectives and social functions to be achieved, especially in the context of protecting land rights and eradicating land mafia.

This analysis is expected to not only produce a description of legal regulations, but also provide a critical analysis related to regulatory reform and strengthening of PPAT supervision to prevent land mafia practices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

An analysis was conducted on primary legal materials (the Criminal Code, Civil Code, Basic Agrarian Law, Government Regulation No. 24/1997, Government Regulation No. 37/1998 in conjunction with Government Regulation No. 24/2016, Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning Regulation No. 2/2018, Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning Circular No. 8/2012, and court decisions related to PPAT and land mafia) and secondary legal materials (scientific articles and doctrines related to PPAT, public official accountability, and professional supervision). These materials were read repeatedly and grouped thematically by looking for recurring patterns related to:

1. The normative position of PPAT in the legal accountability structure,
2. How the law manages the status of authentic deeds and their cancellation,
3. The design and practice of PPAT supervision and guidance, and
4. The connection between these findings and concrete cases such as that of Mbah Tupon.

From the process of grouping and comparing norms, decisions, and doctrines, three main themes emerged as research findings.

The PPAT Accountability Structure is Cumulative in Three Legal Regimes

The first finding is that the legal accountability of PPATs involved in the issuance of deeds of transfer of land rights using fraudulent *modus operandi* is normatively cumulative in three legal regimes: criminal, civil, and administrative.

An analysis of the Criminal Code and the Anti-Corruption Law shows that PPATs can be positioned as perpetrators or participants in criminal acts when they consciously facilitate the use of false data, a series of lies, or accept gratuities in the preparation of deeds (Farid, 2025; Kristanto et al., 2020). An analysis of the Civil Code confirms that the negligence of PPATs in verifying documents and the identities of the parties gives rise to liability for damages based on the construction of unlawful acts (Sari & Sudirman, 2024; Krismiatri & Setyono, 2022; Gaol & Tisnadewi, 2025; Wongso et al., 2024).

On the other hand, PP 37/1998 jo. PP 24/2016 and Permen ATR/BPN 2/2018 provide the basis for administrative sanctions in the form of warnings, temporary dismissals, and permanent dismissals, while Perkaban BPN 8/2012 allows for the cancellation of legally flawed deeds (Huda et al., 2023). A synthesis of these norms and doctrines results in the following concise structure:

Table 1. Summary of Types of Legal Liability of PPATs in Fraud Modus Operandi

Type of Liability	Primary Legal Basis	Focus of Liability	Main Consequences
Criminal	Criminal Code, Corruption Law	Complicity, fraud, forgery, abuse of authority	Imprisonment, fines, criminal stigma
Civil	Articles 1360, 1365, 1366, 1367 of the Civil Code	Unlawful acts, professional negligence	Compensation, restoration of rights, annulment of legal relationships
Administrative	Government Regulation No. 37 of 1998, as amended by Government Regulation No. 24 of 2016, Ministerial Regulation No. 2 of 2018, and Regulation No. 8 of 2012	Breach of duty, defective formal/material documents	Warnings, suspensions, dismissals, cancellations of deeds

These findings confirm and complement previous studies that tend to separate the discussion of PPAT responsibility based on specific legal regimes (e.g. Farid, 2025, emphasises criminal aspects; Sari and Sudirman, 2024, emphasises civil aspects; Umbas & Santoso, 2022, emphasises professional protection aspects). This study shows that in cases of fraud, all three should work together, rather than as mutually exclusive paths.

Tension between the Legal Certainty of Authentic Deeds and the Mechanism for Correcting Problematic Deeds

The second theme arises when the provisions on authentic deeds are read in conjunction with the mechanisms for cancelling deeds and certificates. On the one hand, PPAT deeds are given the status of authentic deeds with strong evidentiary power and function as instruments of legal certainty; this view is in line with the literature that places PPAT as the "guardian" of the land administration system (Alsam & Damayanti, 2020; Rasda et al., 2021; Ardiansyah et al., 2022).

However, on the other hand, BPN Regulation 8/2012 and ATR/BPN Regulation 2/2018 allow for the cancellation of deeds and certificates if formal or material defects are proven to exist. Analysis of this framework reveals several important findings:

1. The legal certainty of authentic deeds is conditional, i.e., it depends on the fulfilment of formal procedures and minimum material verification at the PPAT level.
2. The administrative cancellation mechanism is designed as a means of correcting problematic

deeds, but it has the potential to create uncertainty for bona fide third parties if it is not accompanied by transparent standards and procedures for verification.

3. There is no explicit provision in the regulations regarding minimum operational standards for material verification that must be carried out by the PPAT for it to be deemed to have acted with *due care*.

This finding underlines the normative tension that has not been fully resolved between the protection of legal certainty (for rights holders) and the need for corrective measures (for victims of land mafia). Compared to the literature that generally accepts the concepts of authentic deeds and their cancellation separately (Kristanto et al., 2020; Wongso et al., 2024), this study highlights that the two regimes can conflict with each other at certain points, especially when it comes to parties acting in good faith.

The Disconnect between the Normative Supervision Framework and PPAT Supervision Practices

The third theme relates to the variables of supervision and guidance of PPAT. Normatively, Permen ATR/BPN 2/2018 and the structure of the PPAT Supervisory Board at various levels indicate that a supervision scheme has been established. However, when these normative instruments are read in conjunction with the findings of previous studies (Wira, 2020; Fakhri, 2023; Umbas & Santoso, 2022; Huda et al., 2023), and compared with the facts of land mafia cases (e.g. Mbah Tupon), a consistent pattern of weaknesses emerges:

1. Supervision tends to be reactive and dependent on reports,
2. There is no risk-based oversight design.
3. Limitations in data integration and technological support,
4. Professional guidance is more administrative than substantive.

This pattern of weaknesses can be summarised as follows:

Table 2. Summary of PPAT Supervision and Guidance Gaps

Aspect	Normative Design	Findings of Weaknesses	Practical Implications for Land Mafia Practices
Supervisory Board Structure	Exists at the central, regional, and local levels (Ministerial Regulation No. 2/2018)	Functions are largely administrative, with limited proactive auditing	PPAT officials can operate for a long time without being detected
Evaluation mechanism	Regulated in general terms	No periodic risk-based evaluation and performance indicators	Patterns of violations are not mapped systematically
Information system	Can be integrated in principle	No data-based tracking of suspicious transaction/deed patterns	Illegal transactions appear "normal" on paper
Professional guidance	Mandatory, with a mandate for coaching and competency improvement	The content of guidance consists mainly of regulatory socialisation, with minimal training in detecting land mafia () modus operandi	PPAT is weak as a substantive filter against land mafia

Compared to previous studies that have criticised weak supervision (e.g. [Paramadani & Rubiati, 2020](#); [Umbas & Santoso, 2022](#); [Fakhri, 2023](#)), the findings of this study clarify the pattern of disconnect between normative power on paper and implementation in the field: oversight is designed, but not positioned as a data- and risk-based early detection system.

Discussion

Cumulative Accountability: Untapped Potential

The cumulative accountability structure identified in Theme 1 indicates that, in terms of written regulations, Indonesia does not lack legal instruments to prosecute PPATs involved in fraud. This finding expands on the studies by [Farid \(2025\)](#), [Sari and Sudirman \(2024\)](#), and [Krismiatri and Setyono \(2022\)](#), which tend to focus on a single accountability regime, by showing that conceptually, the three regimes are designed to complement each other, not replace each other.

However, a comparison with case studies such as Mbah Tupon and other cases reviewed in the literature shows that in practice, criminal, civil, and administrative channels are rarely activated simultaneously. Often, the handling stops at administrative cancellation or civil disputes, while the criminal dimension (fraud, forgery, abuse of authority) does not proceed as strongly as the norms indicate.

This explains one of the main inconsistencies that is rarely explicitly acknowledged in the literature: at the normative level, PPATs appear to be highly accountable, but at the implementation level, that accountability is often "narrowed" to ethical or administrative matters. Consequently, from a legal certainty perspective, victims and the public see that authentic deeds are not always followed by firm law enforcement when abuse occurs, thereby eroding trust in the land tenure system.

The Tension Between Legal Certainty and Correction: A Shift in the Focus of Protection

Previous literature has largely positioned PPAT as a guardian of legal certainty and a preventer of disputes ([Alsam & Damayanti, 2020](#); [Rasda et al., 2021](#); [Ardiansyah et al., 2022](#)). This study does not dispute that position, but adds a new analytical layer: the tension between legal certainty (through authentic deeds) and the need for correction when those deeds become instruments of land mafia.

The finding that authentic deeds can be revoked, and that the parameters and standard operating procedures for such revocation remain relatively loose, indicates a *shifting focus* of protection:

1. On the one hand, deeds and certificates are intended to protect legitimate and bona fide rights holders.
2. On the other hand, the system must also protect the first victims (such as former owners like Mbah Tupon) from the deprivation of their rights through fraudulent schemes that exploit PPAT deeds.

This tension explains why legal certainty in the context of land is often considered to be 'deferred certainty'. The term 'deferred certainty' was proposed to describe the phenomenon of uncertainty in legal protection that only becomes apparent after a dispute has been resolved and the authenticity of the deed has been tested. Thus, this term describes the dynamic mismatch between expectations of legal certainty provided by authentic deeds and the reality that such certainty can only be achieved after lengthy legal procedures involving the cancellation of deeds.

Why Do Problems Persist? The Role of Supervision and Guidance as Explanatory Variables

The persistence of land mafia practices, despite the long-established normative framework and status of authentic deeds, can be explained through Theme 3. The disconnect between the

design of oversight and its implementation has proven to be a "missing link" that has not been extensively elaborated in the literature.

Previous studies have noted the weaknesses of PPAT supervision ([Wira, 2020](#); [Fakhri, 2023](#); [Umbas & Santoso, 2022](#)), but more in a descriptive dimension. This study goes further by showing that:

1. Reactive and administrative oversight is structurally unsuitable for dealing with adaptive and network-based land mafia *modus operandi*;
2. Guidance focused on formal compliance does not sufficiently equip PPAT with document forensic skills, transaction pattern analysis, and early detection of fictitious identities.
3. The lack of data integration between institutions (ATR/BPN, PPAT, banking, law enforcement) means that abnormal transaction patterns never appear as "warning signals" at the system level.

This means that supervision and guidance are not merely supporting variables, but the main explanatory variables as to why a strong cumulative accountability framework on paper does not automatically result in effective prevention of land mafia. In other words, the persistent problem is not only a matter of "lack of sanctions", but also a matter of institutional design being incompatible with the nature of the crime at hand.

Contribution to the Legal Framework

Compared to previous studies that were more normative-descriptive (e.g., [Ardiansyah et al., 2022](#), on the limits of notary/PPAT responsibility; [Kristanto et al., 2020](#), on deed cancellation; [Umbas & Santoso, 2022](#), on professional protection; [Fakhri, 2023](#), and [Wira, 2020](#), on supervision), this study offers several contributions:

1. Synthesis of cumulative accountability: combining criminal, civil, and administrative dimensions into a single framework of PPAT accountability in the context of fraud, thereby showing how a single act by a PPAT can (and should) trigger three forms of accountability simultaneously.
2. Identification of the normative tension between certainty and correction: not only explaining the status of authentic deeds and the possibility of their cancellation, but also showing the point of conflict between the two, especially for parties acting in good faith. Here, this study subtly criticises the assumption that "authentic deeds are always synonymous with legal certainty".
3. Placing supervision and guidance as the key explanation: rather than simply referring to "weak supervision", this study shows how this weakness works structurally and why it is a persistent explanatory variable for the land mafia.
4. Recognition of inconsistencies and unexpected findings:
 - a. Inconsistencies between the strength of sanctions on paper and the cumulative weakness of their implementation in practice.
 - b. The finding that the deed cancellation mechanism, intended as protection for victims, can actually create uncertainty for bona fide third parties if it is not accompanied by clear verification standards.

Thus, this study does not merely repeat what has been said in the literature, but explicitly compares and places the findings in the context of previous research, while proposing that future reforms should not stop at adding articles, but should use these findings to:

1. Formulate more detailed material verification standards for PPATs,
2. Developing a risk-based and technology-based supervision model, and
3. Ensuring that criminal, civil, and administrative liability for PPAT is truly operated

cumulatively in cases of land mafia.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the legal liability of Land Deed Officials (PPAT) in cases involving the issuance of land deeds or certificates used in fraud schemes has a cumulative nature across three legal regimes, criminal, civil, and administrative. An analysis of the regulatory framework and court decisions reveals that a single action by a PPAT in a land mafia scheme has the potential to simultaneously activate mechanisms of complicity or forgery in criminal law, unlawful acts in the civil sphere, and ethical and disciplinary sanctions in administrative law. These findings confirm that the responsibility of PPATs cannot be viewed in isolation, but rather as a layered structure of accountability designed to complement each other.

A study of supervision and guidance reveals an imbalance between normative design and practice in the field. Formally, the PPAT Supervisory Board has broad authority and supervisory mechanisms are in place. However, the implementation of supervision tends to be administrative, reactive, and does not utilise technology or risk analysis. Meanwhile, professional guidance has not been directed at improving the substantive capacity of PPAT to detect document forgery, abuse of power, or suspicious transaction patterns. The gap between institutional design and practice explains why the land mafia is still able to exploit verification loopholes and weaknesses in PPAT's internal controls, even though the available sanctions are actually quite strong.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the research objectives have been achieved. First, the configuration of PPAT responsibilities in fraud cases has been identified as a layered accountability structure that requires cumulative application to be effective. Second, an evaluation of the supervision and guidance mechanisms shows that their effectiveness is still far from adequate, so they are not yet able to function as an early detection system for abuse of authority. The analytical implication of this conclusion is that strengthening the accountability of PPATs is not sufficient through the addition of sanctions, but requires systemic transformation that includes consistent law enforcement, the use of integrated verification technology, improved professional competence, and the establishment of a risk-based supervision model integrated with national land data.

Thus, the PPAT needs to be repositioned as the main guardian of legal certainty, while renewed oversight must ensure that this authority can no longer be exploited as a tool for crime by land mafia networks. Comprehensive reform in the normative, institutional, and professional aspects is a prerequisite for restoring public trust and strengthening legal protection in the land sector.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that need to be considered when reading and using its results. The approach used is normative legal, so the analysis focuses on positive law, doctrine, and legal principles, without empirically testing how these norms are implemented in daily practice at the PPAT office or perceived by the community. The scope of the regulations analysed is also concentrated on the national legal framework, particularly the Basic Agrarian Law, Government Regulations on land registration, PPAT position regulations, and relevant implementing regulations, without systematically comparing them with PPAT supervision and accountability models or similar officials in other countries. The case study used focuses on one case of land mafia involving Mbah Tupon in Yogyakarta, which serves as a rich illustration but is not sufficient to describe the full range of land mafia practices and modes in various regions. The analysis of oversight is also limited to the normative dimension and institutional design of the PPAT Supervisory Board and the National Land Agency (BPN), without touching in detail on

organisational capacity, internal dynamics, and practical obstacles at the implementation level. Furthermore, this study has not explored in depth non-legal factors—such as economic incentives, patronage culture, local power relations, and psychological and social factors, which in reality often drive collusion between PPAT officials and land mafia networks.

Considering these limitations, further research can be designed in a more focused and operational manner. First, to complement the normative juridical approach used, further research can adopt a socio-legal or empirical approach by conducting in-depth interviews and structured surveys of PPATs, BPN officials, law enforcement officials, as well as victims and users of land services. This data can be used to map the extent to which the cumulative accountability (criminal, civil, administrative) identified normatively is actually applied in concrete cases, as well as to identify obstacles to its enforcement. Second, the limitations of the scope of regulation can be addressed through comparative legal studies with other countries that have modern land registration systems, for example, by comparing the design of professional supervision, material verification standards by deed officials, and mechanisms for protecting bona fide parties. The results of this comparison can be used to develop a more prescriptive PPAT supervision model for the Indonesian context.

Third, to overcome the limitations of case studies that rely solely on the Mbah Tupon case, subsequent research could use a multiple case study design in several provinces, with cases selected based on variations in *modus operandi*, actor configurations, and socio-economic characteristics of the region. This approach will enable the identification of more common patterns and variants of land mafia *modus operandi*, as well as test whether the findings on PPAT oversight gaps and responsibilities in this study are consistent in various local contexts. Fourth, so that the oversight analysis does not stop at the normative level, further research could focus on institutional studies of the PPAT and BPN Supervisory Board, for example, through organisational audits, mapping the process flow for handling complaints, measuring the workload of Board members, and evaluating oversight performance indicators. This approach will provide a more concrete picture of institutional capacity, bottlenecks, and reform needs.

Fifth, to address the gap in analysis related to non-legal dimensions, future research can be designed in a multidisciplinary manner by involving perspectives from criminology, sociology of law, and public administration. Such research can, for example, examine economic incentives, socio-political networks, and organisational culture that encourage or deter PPATs from engaging in corrupt practices. On the other hand, further research could also test, in more technical terms, the application of legal technology, such as electronic verification systems integrated with population and land data, certified electronic signatures, biometric verification, and data-based transaction pattern analysis as instruments for preventing land mafia activities. Limited-scale trials (pilot projects) in certain areas, accompanied by evaluations of their impact on reducing disputes and improving early detection, will provide a strong empirical basis for proposing regulatory reforms and the design of a national PPAT monitoring system. In this way, the legal accountability model proposed normatively in this study can be tested, refined, and translated into more concrete and effective policy designs.

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