



# The IAE Digest

*News and Program Updates from the Integrated Award Environment*

*Volume 5, Issue 2  
2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY18*



## From the Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Much of the second quarter of 2018 was spent laying the groundwork for our first system transition into beta.SAM.gov. Next quarter, the key functionality of CFDA (Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance) is scheduled to migrate into the beta site (schedules can always change, especially when using Agile development). Today, CFDA is the site managed by the IAE that state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, individuals, public companies, and others use to search for and find federal programs (also known as ‘assistance’).

Retiring CFDA means that the site eventually will shut down and be no more – and the things users used to do in CFDA will be done in beta.SAM.gov. What has been for some time 10 systems will become nine. This trend will continue until all 10 have transitioned into beta.SAM.gov (don’t forget: once the current SAM.gov transitions, the “beta” moniker will drop off and there will be only SAM.gov).

To prepare for the transition, we have spent much of the second quarter working to improve the beta site as a whole and to move the CFDA functions. Some of the items we’ve been working on include:

- Improving beta.SAM.gov’s search engine and keyword search
- Enhancing the summary provided directly in the search results
- Creating better advanced search filtering (Active only, Department/Agency, etc.)



- Implementing a funded/ not funded indicator that allows users to quickly identify funded listings
- Presenting related listing numbers as clickable links allowing quick access to similar listings
- Adding persistent left side navigation for easy navigation within a listing
- Making the financial information section easier to read by adding bar graphs and tables
- Improving the history section
- Linking to respective opportunities on Grants.gov

We'll report out in the next issue of *The IAE Digest* how each of these improvements worked during the transition, as well as what we're continuing to do to make these (and other) aspects of beta.SAM.gov better and easier. However, this list of tasks and accomplishments is a really good start toward transitioning our first system into the new environment.

This second quarter really positioned us well for success in the future. And I stand by with my colleagues more excited than ever before to see what the future brings!

Vicky Niblett  
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

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## IAE Deputy Assistant Commissioner Vicky Niblett Selected as Recipient of FCW Top Honor



Congratulations to IAE's very own Vicky Niblett for being one of *Federal Computer Week's* "Federal 100 Award" recipients for 2018!

The Federal 100 Award recognizes and celebrates government and industry leaders who played pivotal roles in the federal government information technology (IT) community. Winning this award is a testament to the dedication to leadership and hard work that Niblett has demonstrated this past year managing the IAE systems. As you may know, Niblett provides management and oversight of all aspects of the IAE program initiatives. Vicky's work drove the team toward the major milestones of releasing our new site (beta.SAM.gov) in alpha in Fiscal Year 2016 and in beta in Fiscal Year 2017. In that effort, Vicky challenged the team to adopt user-centered design principles, to use agile practices, and to focus on delivery. When the modernization effort is complete, the unified System for Award Management (SAM) website will become the official U.S. government website for people who make, receive, and manage all federal awards.

The 29th Annual Federal 100 Awards Gala was held on March 22nd at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, D.C. to honor all of this year's recipients. Vicky's profile was featured on [fcw.com](http://fcw.com) and appeared in the March/April print and digital issue of the FCW newsletter. For more information and a complete list of this year's recipients, go to <https://fcw.com/fed100>.

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## Did You Know?

### What will happen to the SAM.gov URL when SAM is migrated to beta.SAM.gov?

The IAE launched beta.SAM.gov in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2017. During this modernization process, beta.SAM.gov will coexist with SAM.gov, which means the current legacy system will run in parallel to the beta site and remain the authoritative source until it is migrated to the beta site and decommissioned. Eventually, beta.SAM.gov will become SAM.gov.



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## Newest beta.SAM.gov Updates

The IAE team for beta.SAM.gov pushed out a new software update in February, bringing us closer to our goal of retiring the first systems late in Fiscal Year 2018. The capabilities of this update include:

- A simpler, more secure way to access and maintain a beta.SAM.gov user account
- Ability to migrate existing roles from CFDA, Federal Business Opportunities (FBO), and Federal Procurement Data System - Next Generation (FPDS-NG)
- Assistance Listings administrators being able to create, delete, or modify roles for their agency's users
- Federal users who are logged in will be able to view, create, and update assistance listings.
- Search and view SCA and DBA Wage Determinations and resource information
- Subscribe to a watchlist and receive notifications for certain wage determinations
- Awards extracts and basic API functionality

Also added are advanced search filters and the ability to provide comments on beta.SAM.gov using the Feedback Tool from additional pages. Click [here](#) to find the Feedback Tool on the left-hand side of the Help Center page. Links to such partners as USASpending.gov and Grants.gov are accessible in the lower banner of the site. Stay tuned for updates as we continue toward our goal of a unified SAM.gov. For additional questions about the modernization process, contact us at [IAEO outreach@gsa.gov](mailto:IAEO outreach@gsa.gov).

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## System Updates

### FPDS Data Management Fixes

Data management fixes are changes made to FPDS-NG data as authorized by a GSA project management office, department, or agency administrator. On February 28, 2018, the IAE completed two data fixes to the FPDS-NG website. The following fixes have impacted more than 5,000 awards or Indefinite Delivery Vehicles (IDVs):

- Request from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to close out a given list of contracts, impacting approximately 27,831 records
- Request from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to fix the Date Signed on a given list of records, impacting approximately 6,499 records

### CPARS Enhancements

With each software release, we work to improve the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) and Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) user experience and the quality of information available from CPARS and FAPIIS. We do this through a combination of minor enhancements and fixing known issues. The following summarizes the customer-facing changes that were made to the CPARS/FAPIIS application in version 5.1.0. on January 28, 2018:

- Updated contractor representative email notification identifying the date and time the evaluation was processed to the Rated status
- Bug fix on Original to Modified Ratings Tab viewing
- Bug fix on FAPIIS access email notification identifying Alternate Focal Point when granting the access
- Maximize Use of Auto Registration when manually registering contracts that exist in FPDS
- Unified sign-on will allow users to log in once to access both CPARS and Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS), utilize one current Common Access Card/Personal Identity Verification card or user name/password per user role, and toggle between CPARS and PPIRS applications.

The release notes are located at <https://www.cpars.gov/cparsrel.htm>.

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## IAE Deploys the SAM Fast Path

The IAE is constantly refining the SAM user experience by improving the quality of information available on SAM.gov and reducing the burden for those who do business with the U.S. federal government. To enhance capabilities and save users time, the SAM Fast Path was released on Friday, January 26th.

The SAM Fast Path offers additional user controls for nonfederal government entities, and provides greater control to entity administrators. The additional control functionality offered to entity administrators allows them to review incoming entity registration requests within their organization. The SAM Fast Path prevents unaffiliated users from creating new registrations in SAM.gov by verifying the unique entity identifier (DUNS Number). The update provides these abilities:

- Verify the active status of a DUNS Number on SAM.gov.
- Verify if a DUNS Number is within an organizational hierarchy.
- Users that are part of an organization's hierarchy will receive this message at the Verify DUNS Information page:  
*"You are trying to register an entity that is part of a larger organization. We sent your request to an administrator in that organization. They must review and approve your request before you can register this entity. You will receive an email notification from SAM.gov when the organization administrator makes their decision. Until then, you cannot proceed."*

Users attempting to create new registrations for records that fall within an organizational hierarchy must receive approval from an organizational administrator at a higher level. Once approved, users will be able to complete the registration and manage users on behalf of the organization. If rejected, users will not be able to complete the entity registration or view entities at their level or below in the hierarchy.

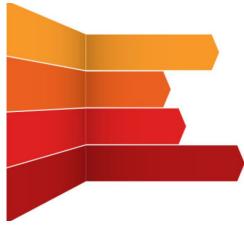
The Federal Service Desk team is prepared to assist users with support materials, including frequently asked questions and these step-by-step quick start guides:

[Registering Entities in an Organizational Hierarchy](#)  
[Non-Federal Administrators](#)

Upon the organizational administrator's determination, The Entity User follows one of two actions below:

- If the request was approved, the user will receive a notification email with instructions to proceed with the registration, and gain access to entity registration data for subsequent organizational entities.
- If the request was rejected, the user will receive a rejection email, the draft record will be deleted from SAM, the user's association with the entity will be revoked, and purview of all subsequent tiers in the organizational hierarchy will be removed.

Additional information is available in the [SAM Release Notes](#), including a high level overview of the core enhancement.



## IAE by the Numbers

### System for Award Management

#### Second Quarter Fiscal Year 2018

- Average number of registrations activated per month:
  - New registrations: 5,848
  - Updated registrations: 61,904
- Average cycle time in Q2 Fiscal Year 2018 was 2.22 days
- Average number of site visits per month was 426,025
- Average number of searches performed per month was 4,450,715

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## Making the Rounds: Conferences and Presentations

### IAE Design Lead Demonstrates New Updates on beta.SAM.gov

IAE's Design Lead, Christy Hermansen, attended three speaking engagements this quarter to share the latest advancements in the beta.SAM.gov modernization.



In February, Hermansen presented a live demonstration of the search functionality to the Professional Services Council's (PSC) Smart Contracting Working Group in Arlington, Virginia. Participants consisting of industry leaders, entrepreneurs, large corporations, and small businesses had the option to attend the seminar virtually or in person. The demonstration explained the new, user friendly method for locating federal award data.



A few weeks later, Hermansen presented at the Greater Reston Virginia Chamber of Commerce, where she provided a status update regarding the FBO.gov website decommissioning and how to prepare for the transition. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions throughout the presentation. Most of the participants were interested in the decommissioning of the federal award websites and seemed excited with the ease of the new search functionality and the user friendly display for contracting opportunities.



In March, Hermansen presented a workshop at the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Center (APTAC) 2018 Spring Conference in Jacksonville, Florida. She joined other experts from

the federal government and industry leaders to discuss topics relevant to government contracting. Her workshop focused on entity registration and role migration, and the importance of how these processes will affect users and entities once beta.SAM.gov becomes the authoritative source for affected legacy systems. She displayed roles and permissions, the standard approach to assigning roles, building and using an entity hierarchy, and how to assign a top administrator on beta.SAM.gov.

Stay tuned to find out where Christy and the development team will go next to share the latest beta.SAM.gov advancements.

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## Industry Day 16: Decommissioning 101 Recap

On March 6th, the IAE hosted another online event in our ongoing series aimed at creating and increasing conversation and dialogue between stakeholders and the folks here who make the systems work.

The main topic of this Industry Day was the decommissioning of the 10 legacy sites. More than 150 attendees joined to hear IAE's Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement Director Nancy Goode and Transition Manager Salomeh Ghorbani talk about what we mean when we say we are preparing to decommission (or transition) one of the legacy systems into what is today called beta.SAM.gov. Participants also heard information about strategic themes and structure for the modernization effort; potential impacts to system users and stakeholders; and

they saw and heard about the roadmap for the the beta.SAM.gov effort.

During the program, participants received tips on how to be ready for the transitions for the first two legacy systems that will be folded into beta.SAM.gov: CFDA and WDOL.

Goode explained that the IAE will post messages on the legacy websites with the planned shutdown date and will provide training sessions about how to use the new site. The IAE also will engage in a wide range of public-facing activities to ensure stakeholders are ready for the switch.

If you missed the Industry Day program, you can view the [full presentation online](#) and the attached slides below.

Stay tuned for an upcoming blog post on the [IAE space on Interact](#) about our next Industry Day.

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## Sign up for an Account on Beta.SAM.gov

The beta.SAM.gov modernization is well underway and the IAE plans to migrate CFDA.gov and WDOL.gov in 2018. The migration is scheduled for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2018 and IT developers are working diligently to transfer the federal award data into beta.SAM.gov. In the interim, please sign up for a beta.SAM.gov account to ensure a swift transition from the legacy websites to beta.SAM.gov.

The new account sign-up process for beta.SAM.gov is still in its infancy and feedback from users is valuable to the success and improvement of the feature. Even if you do not currently use CFDA.gov or WDOL.gov, we encourage you to sign-up for an account (which, at this point, only enables you to save your searches) and use the feedback tool to inform us of how we can refine the process.

More details about the role migration process will be posted on CFDA.gov and WDOL.gov.

Learn how to sign up for a beta.SAM.gov account [here](#). Then, create a new user account at <https://beta.sam.gov/signup>.

## How to be Ready for the CFDA Transition

CFDA.gov will be the first of the 10 existing federal award websites to migrate into beta.SAM.gov. The IAE wants all users to be prepared for this transition and has developed the following reminders.

Users	How to Prepare for the Transition
<b>All users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a new account on beta.SAM.gov—you can do so today if you want to prepare.</li> <li>● Become familiar with beta.SAM.gov searches.</li> <li>● Ensure you keep your legacy system password up-to-date in preparation for the transition.</li> <li>● When we move legacy SAM, you will need to know your legacy username and password to transfer your legacy roles and permissions.</li> <li>● Role management and permissions for industry are still under development.</li> </ul>
<b>CFDA users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keep your legacy username and password up-to-date.</li> <li>● View your assistance listings from the public search.</li> <li>● Create a beta.SAM.gov account today.</li> <li>● Migrate roles from CFDA.gov.</li> <li>● Prepare role assignments for your agency (assistance administrators only).</li> <li>● View your assistance listings in the workspace.</li> <li>● Monitor the CFDA.gov site for announcements regarding the transition.</li> </ul>



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## WDOL Transition: New Way to Stay Updated

Later in FY18, WDOL.gov is being retired and replaced by beta.SAM.gov. Instead of the subscriptions capability that users may be familiar with on the legacy WDOL site, beta.SAM.gov incorporates a new functionality where users will be able to **Follow** the wage determinations (WDs) of their choice and receive email updates for those WDs.

The beta.SAM.gov **Follow** feature provides additional new management capabilities including the ability to adjust email frequency, see all your followings in one place, make bulk updates, etc. This can all be managed from your new centralized profile. For a smooth transition, check your past subscription emails and record the current WD subscription numbers so that you can re-subscribe to them on beta.SAM.gov.

Thank you for your continued support as the IAE strives to make beta.SAM.gov the central location for people who make, receive, and manage federal awards.

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## Staff Spotlight: Zack Sionakides



As a product owner for the IAE, Zack Sionakides and his co-workers maintain the highest quality standards in their efforts to build the modernized site.

“Most of the things our teams facilitate are in the background,” said Zack, who has been with the IAE since October 2015. “But it’s all very mission critical and leads to everything you see in the applications. Considering the volume of transactions, we have to be precise. Ninety-nine percent effectiveness is failure.”

Zack’s work deals with the modernization and system integration of the legacy systems, but the rewards are not reaped individually. “We are self-driven, but also work very well as a team,” he said. “Everyone puts in a lot of effort. We have a good attitude. Nobody tries to outdo anyone. There’s no feeling of competition among us.”

Zack has been well-accustomed to team-oriented goals. After five years of active duty service in the Navy, he was the executive director for a worldwide traffic and motorcycle safety program at all U.S. and international Navy and Marine Corps installations from 2008 to 2014. The program successfully reduced fatality rates by more than half within two years of initiation, reducing the annual rate from about 60 to less than 30.

“It was very fulfilling knowing your work and the work of others around you was saving lives,” said Zack, a native of Lansing, Michigan and current resident of Arlington, Virginia where he lives with his wife and two sons. Zack earned his bachelor’s degree from Michigan Tech and a master’s degree from the University of Maryland at College Park. In his spare time, he enjoys playing soccer, biking, running, and is looking to eventually compete in a triathlon.