The IAE Digest

News and Program Updates from the Integrated Award Environment

Integrated Award Environment

From the Deputy Assistant Commissioner

For the past number of years, we have used *The IAE Digest* to share information about what we called the "new environment" as we were building and launching it. And I have used this space to give you a sense of how the process works inside the team responsible for it, each quarter.

If you've been following along, however, you're well aware that the new environment launched - beta.SAM.gov has been in existence for more than two years now - and you know that we've successfully transitioned three of IAE's systems into it; WDOL.gov, CFDA.gov, and FBO.gov. We've also transitioned some functions from other systems and made some consolidations elsewhere within the IAE world.

That said, we're switching gears here a bit to be able to bring you more timely information as our journey continues. This will be the final "official" edition of The IAE Digest; we're ending the quarterly report-out in this form. Instead, we'll be moving to two other vehicles that will take its place:
- A regular digital newsletter that will provide you with all the information you need about beta.SAM.gov that will be published as information is needed to be shared, and
- An annual report that showcases what we accomplish each fiscal year.

As with all of our outreach, you will be able to find more information about the new beta.SAM.gov updates and the annual report by following us on Interact (GSA's blogging platform). Just search for "IAE" there and choose to follow us for all the information you need about beta.SAM.gov and everything else going on in the IAE.

For any general questions or suggestions about the work we're doing at the IAE, you can always reach me at IAEOutreach@gsa.gov.

Vicky Niblett
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

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IAE by the Numbers

Federal Service Desk Second Quarter FY 2020

- Call volume average: **25,710**, a decrease of 4.4% from FY20 Q1
- Average speed to answer: **35 seconds**, compared to the industry standard of 60 seconds

- Average handle/talk time decreased to approximately **14.51** minutes, compared to **15.31** minutes in FY20 Q1
- First call resolution rate: **95.9%** which continues to exceed the industry standard of 80%

System for Award Management Second Quarter FY 2020

- Average number of registrations activated per month:
  - New registrations: **6,973**
  - Updated registrations: **59,911**
- Average registration cycle time: **11.99 days**

- Average number of site visits in Q2: **1,225,614**
- Average number of site searches in Q2: **6,222,398**

GSA Grants 60-Day Extension of Expiring Entity Registrations in SAM.gov

In support of the U.S. government's response to the COVID-19 national emergency, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requested certain administrative relief for entities doing business with the government. As part of that effort, GSA initiated 60-day extensions to SAM.gov registrations that have expiration dates ranging between March 19, 2020 and May 17, 2020.

No action was required on the part of registrants to receive an extension. This effort is intended as relief for those otherwise required to re-register during that time frame. As an example, an entity that was set to expire on April 1, 2020 was automatically granted an extension to May 31, 2020. There are a total of 61,298 registrations that were impacted by this extension. We processed the extensions throughout the course of a week to lessen the impact on our interfacing systems. GSA completed all extensions by March 28, 2020.

The new expiration dates are included in the SAM entity management extracts and available through web services after the records were extended. Interfacing systems need only consume the data as normal.
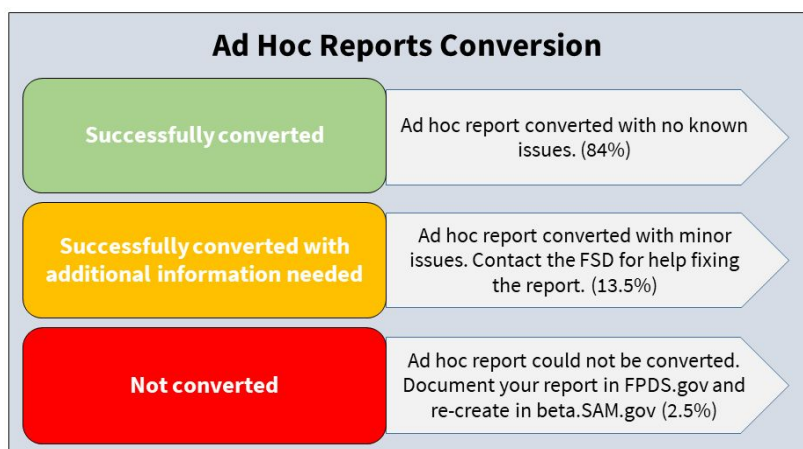

FPDS Contract Data Reports Are Transitioning to beta.SAM.gov

The Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) is one of the systems maintained by GSA's IAE and used to navigate the federal acquisition lifecycle. Users run reports that provide a range of federal procurement data, called FPDS contract data reports. Contract data reports are now available both on beta.SAM.gov and on FPDS.gov to allow users time to become familiar with the new report tool. During this transition period, FPDS.gov will remain the authoritative source. At a future date, the contract data reports tool in FPDS.gov will be decommissioned and contract data reports will be available only at beta.SAM.gov.

Only the contract data reports function is transitioning—the rest of FPDS functionality (search, agency data entry, data extracts, etc.) will remain at FPDS. Once transitioned:

- **Static** reports will not change.
- **Standard** and **Administrative** reports will not change, but any saved parameters will need to be re-created on beta.SAM.gov.
- The **ad hoc** report tool will be different.

There is information you need to know about ad hoc reports in beta.SAM.gov. We attempted to convert any ad hoc reports run in FPDS.gov between January 1, 2019, and January 31, 2020. Any new ad hoc reports created in FPDS.gov on and after February 1, 2020 will not be transferred to beta.SAM.gov. These reports will not be converted or visible in beta.SAM.gov

Ad Hoc Reports Conversion

Successfully converted	Ad hoc report converted with no known issues. (84%)
Successfully converted with additional information needed	Ad hoc report converted with minor issues. Contact the FSD for help fixing the report. (13.5%)
Not converted	Ad hoc report could not be converted. Document your report in FPDS.gov and re-create in beta.SAM.gov (2.5%)

Eighty-four percent of the existing, saved ad hoc reports in FPDS.gov were successfully converted into beta.SAM.gov. A further thirteen percent converted with some issue, such as a

complex filter that will have to be recreated. The conversion helped more than 3,000 active ad hoc reports users who could begin to use reports in beta.SAM.gov without spending time recreating their reports.

When ad hoc users log in to beta.SAM.gov, their converted ad hoc reports will be available to run. Users should run their reports to confirm that information converted correctly. If information is not correct in one of your ad hoc reports, it may not have fully converted. Contact the help desk at FSD.gov for help identifying the problem and fixing your report.

If you do not see your ad hoc report at all, it did not convert. If your ad hoc report was not run between January 1, 2019, and January 31, 2020, it was not automatically converted to the new ad hoc tool in beta.SAM.gov.

Login.gov Account Required for eSRS and FSRS Users

The IAE has implemented a change to the way people login to eSRS.gov and FSRS.gov. Effective April 17, 2020, all eSRS and FSRS users will need a login.gov account in order to use these systems.

If you do not have a login.gov account, you need to create a login.gov account to access eSRS.gov and FSRS.gov. You only need to do this once. Go to login.gov, enter an email address and use the same email address you used for eSRS.gov or FSRS.gov.

Using the same email address allows eSRS.gov and FSRS.gov to link your login.gov account to your existing profile. If a different email address is provided on login.gov, your account will not be connected to your current eSRS.gov or FSRS.gov profile. You must also have a working phone number (mobile or landline). Login.gov will send you a security code as part of multifactor authentication. Government users may use their CAC/PIV cards for authentication. Organizations will no longer be able to use one account for multiple users; login.gov requires individual accounts only.

If you already have a login.gov account, check the email address associated with it. If your current login.gov account matches the email address associated with your eSRS.gov or FSRS.gov account, you are ready for the new login process. Otherwise, you will need to create a new login.gov account using the email you use for eSRS or FSRS.

If you need login-specific assistance, please review the help section of login.gov. For all other issues, continue to contact the Federal Service Desk at www.fsd.gov or by telephone at 866-606-8220 (toll free) or 334-206-7828 (internationally).

Helpful Hints for Multi-Factor Authentication and Session Timeouts

The U.S. government mandates use of **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** for all federal government websites. MFA is an identity authentication method that requires users to provide two or more pieces of evidence (or factors) to access their accounts. Typically, this is accomplished by asking for something you know (e.g., a password) and something you have (e.g., a fingerprint, CAC/PIV, or cell phone). This extra layer of security protects you, your agency or organization, and the government by making it more difficult for someone to gain unauthorized access to your account.

You may have noticed that some of the new features in beta.SAM.gov (like saving searches for contract opportunities) require a user account. Beta.SAM.gov user accounts are created and managed through login.gov, which uses a form of MFA called two-factor authentication. One factor is a password, and you can choose the second factor, along with a backup second factor. By using login.gov, you'll get an extra layer of security to help protect your beta.SAM.gov profile against password compromises
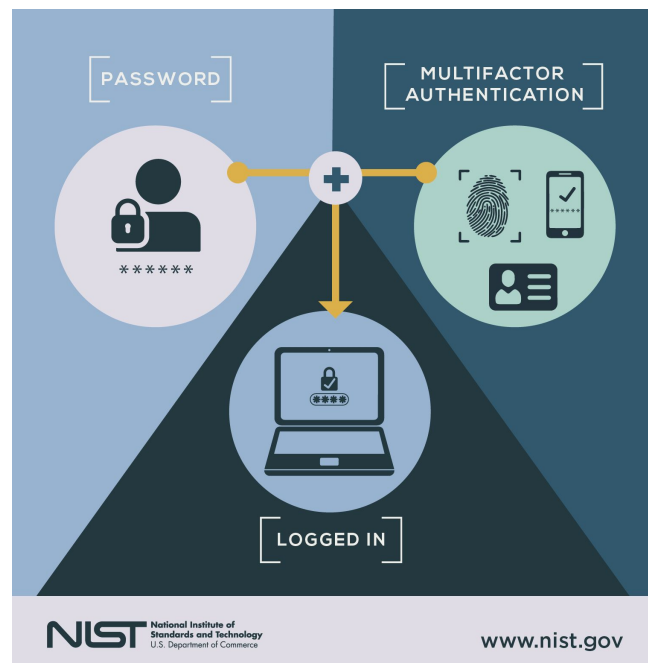
A **session timeout** is a security feature that automatically logs a user off when there is no activity after a certain amount of time. Sessions are created when a user logs in with a username and password. Timeouts occur when the sessions go idle for a period of time, meaning when the system does not receive any action from the mouse or keyboard. Timeouts may occur if you step away from your computer or leave a session window in an idle state. Timeouts ensure that sessions close when they are no longer in use, preventing unauthorized access and reducing exposure to data breaches.

GSA Security Policy requires inactive user sessions to time out. In beta.SAM.gov, timeout occurs after 15 minutes of inactivity. In line with industry standards, beta.SAM.gov presents a pop-up window at 13 minutes of inactivity. This pop-up will stay on screen for 2 minutes and count down to allow you to select "Continue" to continue the session, or "Logout" to close

the session. If you do not respond to the prompt in time, you will be automatically signed out. This is done to protect your account and the integrity of the system.

You may be wondering why the timeouts are necessary, since much of the data in beta.SAM.gov is a matter of public record. Consider, though, that some users have access to view sensitive data. If a user with those permissions is logged in and leaves their computer unattended, a malicious actor could take advantage of the situation to find or change important information. Session timeouts provide an extra layer of security to protect your profile from being compromised. Since, we can't know when or where this might happen, the precaution must be applied to every user account.

For more information, please see NIST Special Publication 800-63B: Digital Identity Guidelines

Engaging Our Stakeholders: Industry Day Recap on the FPDS Reports Transition

On Tuesday, February 25, the IAE hosted our quarterly online Stakeholder Forum webinar. With more than 300 participants, the program focused on the upcoming transition of FPDS reports to beta.SAM.gov.

Contract data reports are now available both on beta.SAM.gov and on FPDS.gov to allow users time to become familiar with the new report tool. During this transition period, FPDS.gov will remain the authoritative source. At a future date, the contract data reports tool in FPDS.gov will be decommissioned and contract data reports will be available only at beta.SAM.gov.

IAE's deputy assistant commissioner Vicky Niblett welcomed all to the webinar; program specialist Salomeh Ghorbani led a presentation deck discussion about the progress of beta.SAM.gov to-date, including the upcoming FPDS reports transition; and Agile product owner Charles Xia gave a live demo of the new reports functionality that became available in beta.SAM.gov on March 16. The program closed with answers to many of the questions submitted online. A copy of the slide deck presentation is available for download on Interact here. And the program itself can be heard, in its entirety, on Adobe Connect here.

Please stay tuned to the IAE space on Interact for more information about all of the IAE systems, including beta.SAM.gov - as well as for details about future events.

Micro Frontend Development Helps to Consolidate IAE Systems

The IAE is consolidating our ten legacy systems into one system, currently located at beta.SAM.gov, providing a single, streamlined digital environment for people who make, manage, and receive federal awards. Bringing together ten independent systems into one environment is, in a word, complex. Many teams of experts are designing and deploying solutions to consolidate legacy IAE systems into an effective, single environment. One way the IAE is doing this is by utilizing micro frontends (MFEs) for software application development.

MFEs are small pieces of a large software application that are designed, developed, tested, and deployed separately, while still appearing as a single product to end users. Breaking up frontend monoliths into manageable pieces has benefits for development teams and end users alike.
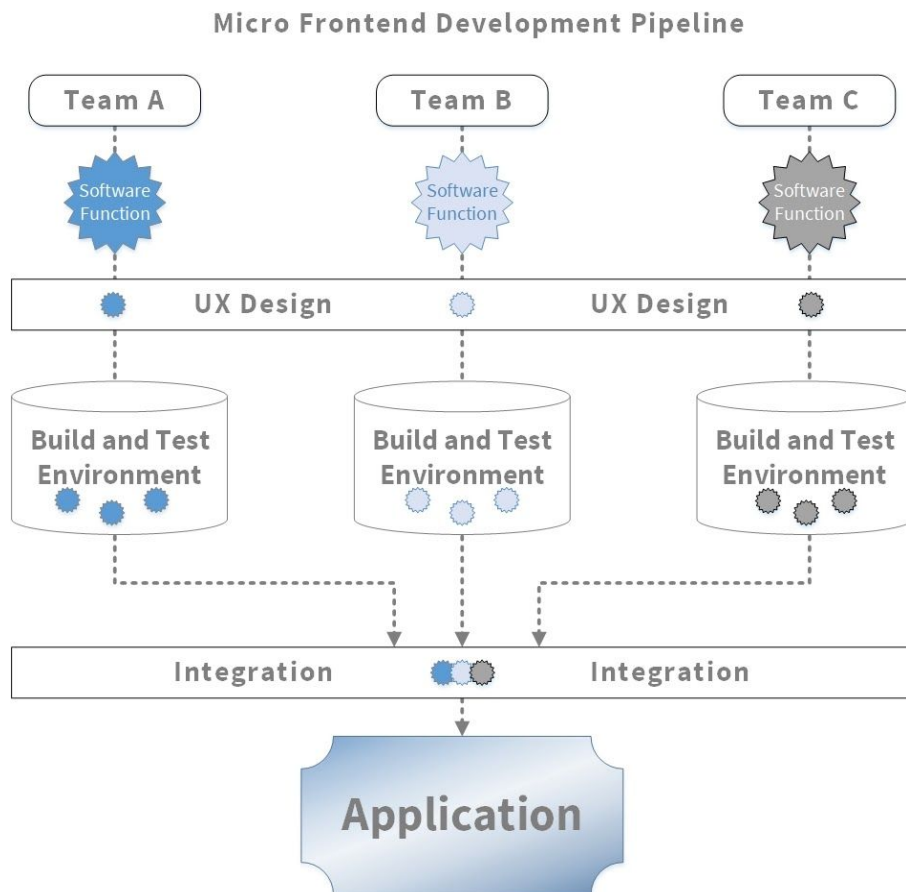
Working on large, complex products or systems across many teams is difficult. MFEs increase efficiency and effectiveness by using smaller, more manageable codebases. They allow different development teams to work on their piece of software architecture without interfering with or delaying the work of other teams. Each independent team has a specialty and focus and it develops its product from start to finish. Application development can, therefore, scale up or down as upgrades or changes to the application are needed. This is useful for beta.SAM.gov because there are many teams working on various aspects of the system. By splitting the work into MFEs, development occurs independently and the teams can complete their work more efficiently

In the integration phase, MFEs are fed to a container application. Container applications allow MFEs to function together without having direct dependencies on each other. It places MFE products in the appropriate place within the application and delivers common elements to MFEs, such as navigation and global headers and footers. Container applications can also interact with an MFE to execute a specific task, keeping the code and functions of each MFE separate, but rendering an integrated experience for the user.

MFEs also help mitigate the need for a complete re-coding of an entire application. Software improvements and updates can be deployed incrementally and on a case-by-case basis. If an update is needed or end users don't like the way something functions, development teams only need to address that one software function rather than the entire application. As a result, users can quickly see incremental improvements and don't have to wait for major upgrades to accomplish changes.

The IAE team continues to make improvements and advance capabilities, leveraging the latest tools and technology to help award management systems work better for all users. Using MFEs to consolidate the IAE systems breaks a massive system integration and redesign into manageable and maintainable slices. They allow for approach-based management of development rather than a focus on specific technologies, which gives teams flexibility and scalability and allows continuous, incremental improvement to software applications.