The IAE Digest

News and Program Updates from the Integrated Award Environment

From the Deputy Assistant Commissioner

As hard as it is to believe, another year has come to an end (the government, fiscal year, that is) and it's time to reflect on all that happened in 2019. As I look back over the past 12 months, I'm reminded - once again - what an amazing group of talented people I work with and all the amazing progress we've made in a variety of areas.

In the first quarter of 2019, I reported in this space that CFDA.gov had been retired and assistance listings had been transitioned to beta.SAM.gov, leaving us with 9 'legacy' systems plus the beta system. Next. we retired WDOL.gov in June and transitioned wage determination functionality into

beta.SAM.gov, leaving us 8 legacy systems. Around the same time, we merged PPIRS.gov into CPARS.gov, leaving only one past performance system. Not only did this move make the coming past performance transition into the beta system easier, but it left us with 7 legacy systems, which is where we stand today.

As you'll see in other articles in this newsletter, we're now set up well for our next transition which will happen in early fiscal year 2020. But the next one, and all the ones to come afterward, couldn't be done without the groundwork we laid in 2019.

Not to be overlooked, the legacy systems we managed in 2019 continued to work well and to have minimal (or no) downtime; the Federal Service Desk continued to perform well and to handle calls and questions about all of our systems with increased customer satisfaction; and we continued to build on our relationships with you - our users and stakeholders - through successful public relations outreach, speaking events, trainings, and more.

There really is no other way to review 2019 for the IAE other than to say it was truly successful. Thank you for sticking with us and for adapting with us as we make changes. Here's to another successful year in 2020.

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

FedBizOps.gov (FBO.gov) is Set to Decommission

As you might have heard by now, FedBizOps.gov (FBO.gov) is set to decommission in November, 2019. The decommission of the system and the migration of federal opportunities into beta.SAM.gov will mark IAE's third system decommission recently (joining CDFA.gov and WDOL.gov). It's all part of our ongoing effort to streamline the federal awards process and make it easier to do business with the government.

As with our previous decommissions, all functionality from FBO.gov will migrate to beta.SAM.gov along with some added improvements. We're making federal contract opportunities more user-friendly.

The move into beta.SAM.gov will include the ability to search for opportunities by number, keyword, or location for more precise results (including easy-to-use search filters). You'll also have the ability to 'follow'- or track - contract opportunities in beta.SAM.gov. To follow an opportunity, simply select the follow button. You'll then receive notifications whenever the opportunity is updated.

There are more improvements and exciting news to come in the coming days and weeks. Be sure to stay tuned here for everything you need to know about the transition of contract opportunities into beta.SAM.gov.

Right now, all you need to do to prepare for the transition is:

- Note any search agents and any notices currently watched in FBO.gov. These will not be migrated, and you can start saving them now in beta.SAM.gov.
- Create a new account in beta.SAM.gov if you want to follow or save searches (you don't need an account to search only).
- Prior to the transition, federal users may begin to migrate roles from FBO.gov or request them in beta.SAM.gov. To migrate roles, you will need an active FBO.gov user name and password. We will publish specific dates for role migration in the future.

After decommissioning, you will be redirected from FBO.gov to beta.SAM.gov.

Keep in mind that until the system is retired in November, FBO remains the authoritative source for contract opportunities.

To learn more about the FBO transition and how it will impact you, please check out the FBO Transition Fact Sheet.

OSM Assistant Commissioner Podcast: GSA Using Modernized Technologies to Improve Systems

Recently, GSA Assistant Commissioner Judith Zawatsky had the opportunity to sit down for a recorded session with *GovernmentCIO Media & Research* to discuss much of the progress being made in the Federal Acquisition Service's Office of Systems Management (OSM), which Zawatsky manages.

A publication for government's tech-minded executives and a place where public and private sector IT decision-makers go to learn, *GovernmentCIO Media & Research* was the perfect place for Zawatsky to talk about everything OSM is doing to make improvements to the federal government's award systems.

During the segment, Zawatsky talks about how in her time with the agency, GSA has worked hard to change its perspective to one where the customer experience is fundamental and is key to all the agency does, according to Zawatsky.

When she first came to GSA, Zawatsky says the historical perspective was that, "…We're the government, we're going to tell you what to do, we're going to tell you how to do it, and if you want to participate in this federal world you're going to do it."

She explained how today, GSA is designing systems with users in mind and no longer only with federal processes or policies as the driving force.

As an example, Zawatsky said that she is incredibly proud of the work being done in OSM's Integrated Award Environment (IAE) to create the ability for GSA award systems to interface and communicate with hundreds of downstream systems across government. She also sees great potential in the way IAE is working to coordinate the implementation of policies in a way that allows the government to get information once and use it multiple times.

"I think the next 12-to-18 months at IAE is going to be enormously exciting as the world begins to see a lot of the work that is in development or that is in testing right now and it comes out," said Zawatsky. "We're going to modernize the systems, we're going to reduce burden. We're going to cut out some of that nonsense people have to do to work around the system and make them easy, efficient, and modern."

To listen to the full recording, click above or click [here](#).

Fourth Quarter System Updates - Legacy Sites

SAM Quarterly Release Improvements
During the fourth quarter of 2019, we made the following updates to SAM.gov (partial list):

- To further increase security and deter fraud, SAM enhanced the data entry validation requirements on the Financial Information page. When updating an existing entity

registration, entity administrators will be required to enter their current routing/account numbers to enable editing of financial data.

- Updated email notification sent to users for their SAM System Account password expiration. Clarified the distinction between users' login.gov credentials and SAM System Account passwords and provided instructions to ensure users retain access.
- Fixed an issue on Manage Roles page preventing Federal users from searching for and viewing other existing Federal user accounts. Existing federal user accounts will now be displayed on the Users List page via Search and by loading Agencies, as well as the Manage Roles page.
- Fixed an issue on the My Roles page preventing users from successfully managing their own existing role associations.
- Fixed an issue where the Certifier Name was displaying blank in the Reps & Certs for entities with multiple entity administrators. The Certifier Name will now display the name of the user who certified to the entity's Representations and Certifications.
- Updated Product Service Code (PSC) data to reflect the latest Procurement Committee for e-Government (PCE) guidance. Updated the description for PSC D305 and added two new PSCs: R616 and R617.
- Added a 50-character limit to the Data Access Request Job Title field to be consistent with database design.

A Look Back at Our Top Articles of FY 2019

Create A New Account in beta.SAM.gov using the login.gov Implementation

Login.gov has successfully been implemented into beta.SAM.gov. This addition provides a safer, more efficient way to access all your federal award information in one location. Since login.gov is a shared service, you need only one password to access your beta.SAM.gov account.

Converting to login.gov makes it easier for users to link to their SAM.gov account with one password. Once you enter your password, an SMS security code is sent to your mobile phone, which grants you access to a 16-digit personal key.

With the move to login.gov, if you already have a beta.sam.gov account and use the same email to create your login.gov account, your existing beta.sam.gov profile will be linked. If you have an existing SAM.gov login.gov account, you can sign in using that email and password also.

Using the same email address, all of your previous beta.SAM.gov profile information will link to your login.gov account. If you do not remember the email associated with your beta.SAM.gov account, you must make a new login.gov account. You will no longer have access to previous information once you have created a login.gov account with your new email address.

To create a new account follow these steps:
1. Go to beta.SAM.gov.
2. Go to sign up on the toolbar
3. Select create an account
4. Enter your email
5. You will receive a link with a security code via email.
6. Go to the link and enter that security code and press continue.
7. Create your password. Press continue.
8. Select the method by which you wish to receive one-time security codes in the future. *If you are a federal user, you have the option of selecting CAC/PIV in lieu of us sending you a security code.*
    a. Click on Add CAC/PIV
    b. Select a certificate
    c. Provide the PIN number for your CAC/PIV card
9. Once you select your preferred method, press continue.
10. You will receive a link with a security code via email. Go to the link and enter that security code and press Continue.

11.   You will be provided a personal key. Follow the instructions on how to protect this key so it can be used in the future.

12.   Once you have "saved" the personal key in a safe place. Press continue.

13.   Enter your personal key.

Please note that every time you log in to beta.SAM.gov you will be asked for your email, password, and one-time security code sent via a preferred method. If you are a government user, you can select CAC/PIV as one of the one time methods. For more help check out the new [Sign-in video](#) in the learning center.

WDOL.gov Retired; Wage Determinations Now in beta.SAM.gov

Wage Determinations OnLine.gov (WDOL.gov) is retired and no longer available to access for wage determination information. As of now, beta.SAM.gov is the official source for wage determination data. Everything you used to do in WDOL.gov, can now be done in beta.SAM.gov.

In beta.SAM.gov, the WDOL functionality falls under the category (what we call 'domain') Wage Determinations. In order to use the "Follow" button on beta.SAM.gov to "watch" specific wage determinations, you must log in.

When we migrated over the functions of WDOL, we made significant improvements, including:

- Offering the ability to search data by number, keyword, or location for exact and immediate results
- Providing easy to use search filters to quickly find the right wage determination
- Introducing the ability to search both active and inactive (archived) data at the same time
- Providing a timeline and history of changes made to a wage determination
- Creating a robust learning center with FAQ's, Video tutorials, and glossary information
- Adding capabilities such as saving searches, following and managing follows, and accessing the workspace for those who create a beta.SAM.gov user account

At this time, anybody who tries to access WDOL.gov will be redirected to beta.SAM.gov. The redirect page provides easy access to the wage determination search, Learning Center, quick start guide, and more. Users can get information and guidance about the new Wage Determination functions by visiting the Learning Center on beta.SAM.gov.

For more information about the overall evolution of beta.SAM.gov, stay tuned to IAE's Interact section or visit GSA.gov/IAE.

Update on the CPARS/PPIRS Merger

On January 15, 2019, the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS.gov) was officially retired to conclude its merger with the Contract Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS.gov). The PPIRS name will only appear in the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

Data from PPIRS has been merged into CPARS.gov, making CPARS the official system for past performance information. This merge simplifies functions such as creating and editing performance and integrity records, changes to administering users and running reports, generating performance records, and viewing/managing performance records.

Users will now have one location and one account to perform all functionality. Federal users with a Common Access Card (CAC) or Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card or a contractor with a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificate, will log in using the Accept/Login with PKI button. Federal users who don't use PKI/PIV or a contractor who doesn't have a PKI certificate will log in using their email address and a password.

Upon using CPARS.gov for the first time, users are required to reset their password to securely log on to the merged system. To help prevent unauthorized access, a one-time access code is needed when using a password to log in.

For any questions, please contact the CPARS Desk at WEBPTSMH@navy.mil.

GSA Announces Award for Entity Validation Services

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) announced in a news release the award (available here on FBO.gov) of a one-year base, and four option periods, $41,751,329 dollar contract to Ernst and Young LLP (EY) that will provide entity validation services for the federal

award process. The federal government must validate the identity of each entity (company, individual, organization, etc.) wanting to do business with -- or receive assistance from -- the government. The GSA contract will reduce unnecessary duplication across the government by ensuring individual agencies do not have to separately contract for these services, but will instead receive the service by way of SAM.gov.

"Securing this five-year contract means that the federal government will have a safe, secure, and unified method for validating entities, while also simplifying the process for those who seek awards," said GSA Office of Systems Management Assistant Commissioner Judith Zawatsky. "This award greatly improves the government's ability to manage data and is an important step forward to competitively procuring entity validation services on behalf of the entire government award community."

GSA released two Requests for Information (RFIs) to gather feedback from industry and other stakeholder organizations regarding the future structure of entity identification and validation services. Both RFIs received numerous responses from government agencies, industry, and other stakeholders.

The contract with EY will run through March 2024. During the transition to the new provider, the government will receive continued service from Dun & Bradstreet to maintain award reporting and data integrity. This contract is managed by GSA's Office of Systems Management.

Financial Assistance Representations & Certifications

The System for Award Management (SAM) exists to help individuals and businesses (entities) do business with the federal government. For entities seeking financial assistance (grants) or to submit a contract proposal, you must register on SAM first. Recently, the registration process in SAM has changed to decrease the burden for registrants applying for financial assistance and federal agencies.

On February 2, 2019, the System for Award Management (SAM) implemented a new process that allows financial assistance registrants to submit common federal government-wide representations and certifications. The procurement representation and certifications have not changed. For entities applying for financial assistance funding, as they initially register or complete their annual registration renewals, entities will be required to review financial

assistance representations and certifications before their registration can be activated. As entities renew and re-register their accounts, the data collected will make SAM.gov the federal repository for this information. By completing the representations and certifications in SAM, the grantee application and administrative processes will be significantly streamlined, making it easier to do business with the federal government. This change is in accordance with the September 5, 2018, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-18-24, "Strategies to Reduce Grant Recipient Reporting Burden."

Since registration in SAM.gov is required for federal awards and must be updated annually, federal agencies will use the SAM entity registration information, including the representations and certifications, to verify recipient compliance with award requirements. This will reduce the duplicative practice of agencies requesting representations and certifications with the submission of each financial assistance application.

IAE Staff Wins Fed 100 Award

Federal Computer Week (FCW) named IAE Business Operations Program Manager Marci Eaton as one of its Fed100 Award winners in February.

Eaton was recognized for her ability to take a desired outcome and utilize resources to achieve a specific goal. Instead of waiting until 2020 to start the work on the modernization effort to bring the past performance systems (CPARS/PPIRS) into SAM.gov, she initiated a pre-modernization effort and was able to merge the functionality ahead of schedule.

According to FCW, the award honors "exceptional individuals who are transforming government and its ability to deliver on critical missions."

IAE By the Numbers

Federal Service Desk
Fourth Quarter FY 2019:

- Call volume average: **25,483**, a decrease of 0.01% from FY19 Q3
- Average speed to answer: **25 seconds**, compared to the industry standard of 60 seconds
- Average handle/talk time decreased to approximately **15.16** minutes, compared to **15.26** minutes in FY19 Q3
- First call resolution rate: **84.2%** which continues to exceed the industry standard of 80%

System for Award Management
Fourth Quarter FY 2019:

- Average number of registrations activated per month:
  - New registrations: **6,254**
  - Updated registrations: **49,077**
- Average cycle time: **13.42 days**
- Average number of hits: **1,278,694**