Upgrades and Changes to the Appian Platform for the Transit Award Management System and the National Transit Database

What is happening?

FTA is deploying an upgrade to Appian, the IT platform which supports Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) and the National Transit Database (NTD). The upgrade from Appian 16.3 to Appian 17.1 will change the "look and feel" of TrAMS and the NTD. Users will notice that information and navigational buttons are larger and occupy more space on the screen with less "white space" on the left hand side of the screen. The upgrade does not alter the underlying functionality of TrAMS or the NTD.

When with the upgrade take place?

The upgrade will occur on 5/27/2017

Why is this occurring?

Each time Appian is upgraded new features are made available to the FTA, which provide enhancements to security, the user experience, and system performance. We usually upgrade a few months after new features are released. We are happy to now be able to upgrade our platform to the latest release, which has a few interface changes.

Who will notice the changes?

The changes will be visible to all TrAMS and NTD users who both work for FTA and FTA recipients.

Will there be training on how to use TrAMS or the NTD under the upgrade?

FTA plans to update the user guides to include screenshots that reflect the upgrade to 17.1 but does not plan to offer formal training on how to use the system with the 17.1 upgrade. As with many software upgrades, the new look and feel of TrAMS and the NTD may take a little while to get used to, however most users should be able to navigate the system after using it a few times.
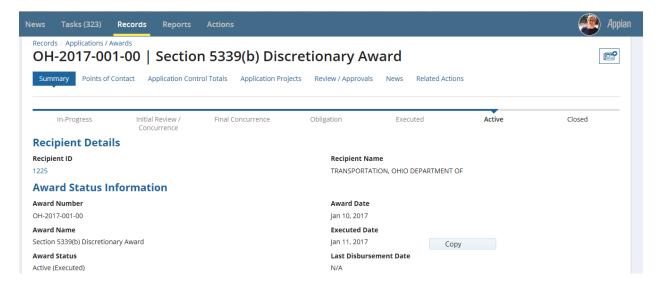
What changes will users notice?

1) **Menu Options display horizontally at the top of the screen instead of vertically on the side of the screen.**

Under Appian 16.3, the options to take action on a record (i.e "related actions") and to look up information about that record displayed on the left hand side of the screen. In the example below, a user would click one of the left-hand options to take action or access details on an awarded grant.
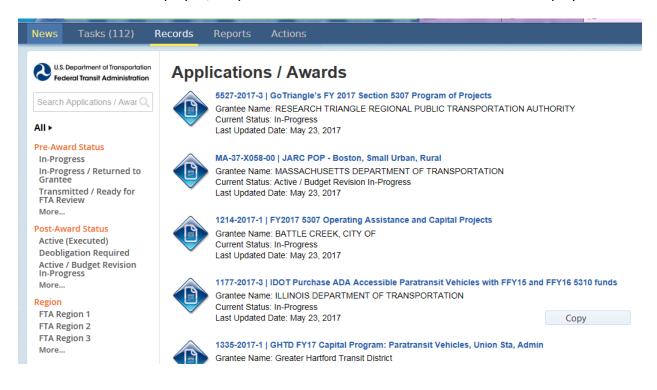

With the upgrade to 17.1, users have the same menu options, however they are displayed at the top of the screen and the detailed information about the record takes up more space on the screen. See example below:

2) **Search Options Display Horizontally Across the Top of the Screen and Default Search Options are Replaced by Drop-Downs**

Search options also display horizontally across the top of the screen instead of vertically on the side of the screen. The existing 16.3 version which displayed some, but not all, of the search criteria in the default view has been replaced with drop-down boxes where users can select the search criteria they need. Below are screen shots of the application search feature in 16.3 vs. the 17.1 upgrade.

In the example below, a user who wants to search for applications that are "in progress" clicks on the "in progress" link underneath "pre-award status." If a user needs to search by other pre-award statuses not displayed, they click the "more" link and the other statuses display.

In the 17.1 upgrade, a user searching for applications in progress would click the "pre-award status" drop-down button and all of the pre-award status options display.

(The above example is a view of a search available to an FTA user. Recipient users may have fewer search options, such as only being able to search for their organization's grants and not all grants).

3) Navigation Buttons are larger, in a different format and are a single color

Under the Appian 17.1 upgrade, users will notice that the buttons that allow them to continue, save, go back, close, or take other action in the system are larger and have a different format and font. Once the 17.1 upgrade is fully implemented, buttons will no longer be in different colors. A future Appian upgrade will include greater use of colors. Below is a view of navigation buttons under the Appian 16.3 vs. 17.1

16.3

17.1

Users may continue to see some of the green buttons for a period of time after the upgrade deployment until all of the forms have been updated.

Are additional upgrades planned for the future?

Yes, FTA plans to implement Appian upgrades on a quarterly basis. We do not anticipate that our next upgrades will impact the look and feel of the system as significantly.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the Upgrade?

Although the upgrade should not impact the underlying functionality of the system, please contact the TrAMS help desk at FTA.TrAMS.Help@dot.gov or 1-877-561-7466 if you have concerns that the upgrade has impacted your ability to business in the system.