ID number and title, by the following method:

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name, Docket ID number and title for this Federal Register document. The general policy for comments and other submissions from members of the public is to make these submissions available for public viewing on the Internet at http://www.regulations.gov as they are received without change, including any personal identifiers or contact information.

DOD Clearance Officer: Mr. Frederick Licari.

Written requests for copies of the information collection proposal should be sent to Mr. Licari at WSH/ESD Directives Division, 4800 Mark Center Drive, East Tower, Suite 03F09, Alexandria, VA 22350–3100.


Aaron Siegel,
Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 2017–13503 Filed 6–27–17; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 5001–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Office of the Secretary

Department of Defense Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory (STRL) Personnel Management Demonstration (Demo) Project Program

AGENCY: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, DoD.

ACTION: This notice amends existing STRL Personnel Management Demonstration Project Programs.

SUMMARY: STRLs may implement a new direct hire authority to appoint and noncompetitively convert to the competitive service qualified candidates enrolled in a program of undergraduate or graduate instruction leading to an undergraduate or advanced degree in a scientific, technical, engineering or mathematical course of study. STRLs may appoint students to a temporary, term, modified term (for those STRLs with modified term appointment authority), or flexible length student term appointment that will expire 120 days after completion of the designated academic course of study. Students may also be appointed to temporary, term or flexible length student term appointments at the discretion of the STRL Director. Students hired under the

Scientific, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Student Employment Program (SSEP) may receive a relocation incentive/bonus each time the SSEP student returns to duty similar to the authority granted to the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) in 75 FR 53076, August 30, 2010.

DATES: This notice may be implemented beginning on June 28, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Department of the Army
- ARL: Ms. Dianne Hawkins, Program Manager, ARL Personnel Demonstration Project, RDRL–LOH, 2800 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi, MD 20783–1197;
- AMRDEC: Mr. Chad Marshall, Demonstration Project Manager, AMRDEC, 5400 Fowler Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898–5000;
- CERDEC: Mr. Christopher Tahaney, CERDEC Personnel Demonstration Project Administrator, C4ISR Campus Building 6002, Room D3126D, ATTN: RDER–DOS–ER, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005;
- ECBC: Ms. Patricia Milwicz, Management and Program Analyst, ECBC, Directorate of Program Integration, Workforce Management Office, Department of the Army, ATTN: RDCB–DPC–W, 5183 Blackhawk Road, Building 3330, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010–5424;
- ERDC: Ms. Patricia Sullivan, Personnel Demonstration Project Manager, U.S. Army ERDC, 3909 Halls Ferry Road, Vicksburg, MS 39180–6199;
- MBMC: Ms. Linda Krout, Personnel Demonstration Project Manager, 505 Scott St, Fort Detrick, MD 21702–5000;
- NSRDEC: Ms. Joelle Montecalvo, Demonstration Project Manager, NSRDEC, Kansas Street, (AMSRD–NSR–BO–W), Natick, MA 01760;
- TARDEC: Ms. Jennifer Davis, TARDEC, ATTN: RDTA–CS/MS 204, Warren, MI 48397–5000;

Department of the Air Force
- AFRL: Ms. Rosalyn Jones-Byrd, Personnel Demonstration Project Manager, AFRL, 1864 4th Street, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH 45433–5209.

Department of the Navy
- ONR: Ms. Margaret J. Mitchell, Director, Civilian Human Resources, ONR, 875 North Randolph Street, Code BD, Arlington, VA 22203;
- NRL: Ms. Ginger Kisamore, Human Resources Director/Demonstration Program Project Manager, NRL, 4555 Overlook Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20375–5320;

NAVSEA: Mr. Diane Brown, NAVSEA Warfare Centers Personnel Demonstration Project Manager, Naval Surface Warfare Center Philadelphia Division, 5001 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19112–5083;

NAVAIR: Mr. Richard Cracraft, Naval Air Warfare Center, Weapons Division (NAWCD), Code 730000D, 1 Administration Circle, Building 00464, China Lake, CA 93555–6100;

Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SSC):
- SSC Atlantic: Ms. Veronica Truesdale, SSC Atlantic STRL Project Lead, SSC Atlantic, P.O. Box 190022, North Charleston, SC 29419–9022;
- SSC Pacific: Ms. Angela Hanson, SSC Pacific STRL Project Lead, SSC Pacific, 53560 Hull Street, San Diego, CA 92152–5001.

DoD

Dr. Jagadeesh Pamulapati, Director, DoD Laboratories Office, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22350, (571) 372–6372, jagadeesh.pamulapati.civ@mail.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

Section 342(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 1995, Public Law (Pub. L.) 103–337, as amended by section 1109 of the NDAA for FY 2000, Public Law 106–65, and section 1114 of the NDAA for FY 2001, Public Law 106–398, authorizes the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to conduct personnel demonstration projects at DoD laboratories designated as STRLs. All STRLs authorized by section 1105 of the NDAA for FY 2010, Public Law 111–84, as well as any newly-designated STRLs authorized by SECDEF or future legislation may use the provisions described in this Federal Register Notice (FRN). STRLs implementing this flexibility must have an approved personnel management demonstration project plan published in a FRN and shall fulfill any collective bargaining obligations. Each STRL shall establish internal operating procedures as appropriate. The 15 current STRLs are:

- Army Research Institute (ARI)
- Army Research Laboratory (ARL)
- Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center (AMRDEC)
A. Authority

STRLs may use the direct-hire authority authorized by section 1105 of the NDAA for FY 2015 to appoint students pursuing bachelors or advanced degrees in STEM disciplines to temporary, term, flexible length student term, or, for those STRLs with modified term appointment authority, via modified term appointments. STRLs may use the authority authorized by section 1104 of the NDAA for FY 2016 to provide SSEP students noncompetitive conversion to permanent scientific or engineering positions upon graduation from the applicable institution of higher education provided the students meet all eligibility criteria and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualification requirements for the position.

B. Definitions

1. STEM positions are those positions described in the STRL FRN (Appendix B) or internal operating procedures in the Scientist and Engineer and/or Technical Career Paths. The positions not classified under the broad-banding structure will be identified in respective STRL internal operating procedures.


3. Qualified candidates are defined as students who:

   (a) Are enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) in a program of undergraduate or graduate instruction leading to a bachelor’s or advanced degree in a (STEM) course of study at an institution of higher education as that term is defined in section B.2., and includes those enrolled in a 2-year university parallel (or equivalent) program designed specifically for transfer to a 4-year institution.

   (b) Meet the minimum qualification standards for the position as described in Appendix C of this FRN or the specific STRL demonstration project qualification standards for the position to be filled.

4. “Employee” is defined by 5 U.S.C. 2105.

C. Provisions

1. Use of this appointment authority must be consistent with merit system principles.

2. Student appointments authorized by section 1105 of the NDAA for 2015 may be term, modified term, flexible length student term or temporary. If students are appointed under existing term or modified term appointments
because flexible length student term appointments are not available at the time of appointment, they may convert to the new flexible length student term appointment provided they were notified in writing at the time of the initial appointment of the possibility they may be converted at a later date.

3. Qualified candidates may be appointed to scientific and engineering student positions without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33, title 5, U.S.C. (other than sections 3303 and 3328).

4. Upon graduation from the applicable institution of higher education, successful candidates in section 2.II.C.3. may be noncompetitively converted to permanent scientific or engineering positions in the competitive service within the STRL without regard to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. chapter 33 (other than sections 3303 and 3328).

5. During each calendar year, each STRL may authorize to appoint no more than (10) percent of the total number of scientific and engineering positions within the STRL that are filled at the close of the previous fiscal year.

6. Classification/Pay Bands/Career Tracks. This FRN authorizes the STRLs to establish separate pay band/career track level(s) to modify existing pay band/career track level(s) and classification guidelines to accommodate students hired under this direct-hire authority. Specific details regarding student classification pay band/career track level(s) shall be included in the respective STRLs' internal operating procedures.

7. Temporary Appointments (Students). Temporary appointments are typically used for short-term use (e.g., summer employment), however, temporary appointments may be made for up to one year and may be extended provided the criteria for the student appointment continue to be met. An appointment after a break in service of three or more days shall count against the direct-hire allocation in section 2.II.C.5 as a new appointment.

(a) Promotion. Students may be promoted while serving on the flexible length student term appointment to a higher grade/band level provided the student meets the program and qualification requirements for the position.

(b) The conversion request must be submitted to the human resources office within 120 days of completion of all degree requirements, but before the time-limited appointment expires.

1. Time spent under a term or flexible length student term appointment shall count towards the probationary period completion and career tenure. If the student was converted from a temporary to a term or flexible length student term appointment without a break in service of three days and was subsequently converted to a permanent position, the temporary time shall also count towards career tenure.

2. Time spent under a temporary appointment, unless otherwise provided in section 2.II.C.11(b)(1), is not counted towards career tenure.

3. SSEP students are subject to a probationary period as specified in section 2.II.C.9.

4. The provisions of the career transition assistance programs in subparts B, F, and G of 5 CFR part 330 do not apply to the noncompetitive conversions.

(c) In cases where the STRL Director does not plan to convert the SSEP student to a permanent position, the SSEP’s Flexible Length Student Term appointment may be terminated less than 120 days after completion of the designated academic course of study, subject to any applicable requirements of 5 U.S.C. chapter 75.

12. Recruitment flexibilities.

(a) Tuition Assistance. (1) Students may be eligible for tuition assistance. At the STRL Director’s discretion, a student may be required to sign a written service agreement to continue in service for a period of up to three times the length of the time spent in training prior to accepting tuition assistance. The requirement for the length of the service obligation should be included in the respective STRL’s internal operating procedures.

(b) A student who is eligible to continue employment for the duration of the obligated service and who does...
not fulfill the service obligation may be required to provide repayment. Pursuant to 5 CFR chapter 1, section 410.309(c).

(3) Expenses of training. Students hired under the SSEP may be paid travel expenses when the worksite is in a different geographic location than that of the student’s academic institution. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 4109(a)(2), these expenses may be paid each time the student returns to duty to the STRL. Procedures for paying these expenses shall be documented in the STRL’s respective internal operating procedures.

(b) Pay Flexibilities.

(1) STRLs may use any applicable pay flexibilities (e.g., recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives under 5 CFR part 575; student loan repayments under 5 CFR part 537; and the superior qualifications and special needs pay setting authority and the maximum pay rate rule under 5 CFR part 330, subpart B, or demonstration project pay flexibilities). Procedures for paying these flexibilities shall be documented in the STRL’s respective internal operating procedures.

(2) Relocation Incentive/Bonus.

Students hired under the SSEP may receive a relocation incentive/bonus. The authority to pay relocation incentives is expanded to allow an STRL to pay an incentive each time the student returns to duty to the laboratory. This authority applies to all student positions in the STRLs and provides the ability to expand recruitment to top universities and incentivize mobility by paying additional expenses to students accepting employment outside of their geographic area. A relocation bonus may be paid when the worksite is in a different geographic location than that of the student’s college and is intended to cover some or all of the student’s living expenses while working in the STRL. Procedures for paying these incentives shall be documented in the STRLs internal operating procedures. This section provides all designated STRLs the authority to implement a relocation bonus similar to the authority granted to the AFRL in the Air Force Research Laboratory in 75 FR 53076.

D. Personnel Considerations

1. Work Schedules. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work per week as long as all applicable laws and regulations governing over time and hours of work are adhered to. Supervisors and students should agree on a schedule of school and work such that work responsibilities do not interfere unduly with the completion of the educational program.

2. Break in Program. STRL directors may use their discretion in either approving or denying a request for a break in program. This may be further delegated in the STRLs’ internal operating procedures. A break in program is a period of time when the student is working but is unable to go to school, or is neither attending classes nor working.

3. Reduction in Force (RIF). Demonstration project students are covered by the RIF rules outlined in each STRL’s FRN. Students serving under a temporary appointment are covered under Tenure Group 0 until completion of one year of continuous creditable civilian service. If the temporary appointment is extended for an additional year, then the tenure changes to Tenure Group 3. Students serving on a term appointment are covered under Tenure Group 3.

Note: All STRL RIF rules must be updated to incorporate the requirements of 10 U.S.C. 1597(f).

4. Termination.

(a) Temporary appointments expire upon the not-to-exceed date, unless extended.

(b) Flexible Length Student Term appointments for SSEP students expire 120 days after completion of the designated academic course of study, unless the human resources office has been notified that the student will be converted noncompetitively to a permanent position as described in paragraph 2.II.C.11.

(c) Individuals may retain eligibility for SSEP if they continue to meet the definition of a “student” (i.e., are enrolled in a qualifying academic program) as identified in Section 2.II.B.3 and meet any academic requirements specified by the employing STRL.

(d) Students may be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, mission requirements, misconduct, poor performance (including academic), or suitability.

E. Authorized Positions

1. SSEP appointments. The number of appointments made in a calendar year may not exceed 10 percent of the total number of scientific and engineering positions in such STRL, to include Senior Executive Service, Senior Technical, Senior Scientific Technical Manager or above General Schedule (GS)-15, military, and students within the STRL that are filled as of the close of the fiscal year ending before the start of such calendar year.

2. When determining the number of appointments authorized, if the percentage of authorized positions does not equal a whole number, the STRL shall round down to the next lower number.

3. Any changes to these authorizations, such as (but not limited to) increasing the number of appointments allowed or extending/eliminating the sunset date, do not require additional FRN notification.

F. Evaluation

STRLs will provide information and data on the use of these direct-hire appointment authorities including numerical limitations, hires made, declinations, veterans hired, difficulties encountered, and/or recognized efficiencies when requested by the SECDEF, head of the Military Department, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Research & Engineering), or Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy).

Appendix A

United States Code and Code of Federal Regulations Waived Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title 5, United States Code</th>
<th>Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, U.S.C. (other than sections 3303 and 3328).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 CFR 300–330, other than Subpart G of 300 waived to the extent necessary to allow provisions of the direct hire authorities as described in this FRN.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 CFR Part 316, Subparts C–D—Waived to the extent necessary to allow provisions of the direct hire authorities as described in this FRN.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Title 5, United States Code

5 U.S.C. 4108 (a)–(c)—Employee Agreements; Service after Training. Waive to allow: (1) the STRLs to determine if a service agreement is required and if so, to determine the period of required service for students employed under the Demo; (2) the Commanding Officer or the Laboratory STRL Director to waive in whole or in part a right of recovery; and (3) allow students to sign a service agreement up to three times the length of the training.

5 U.S.C. 5753—Recruitment and relocation bonuses. Waived to the extent necessary to allow those STRL scientific and engineering employees and positions to be treated as employees and positions under the General Schedule and to allow relocation incentives to be paid to SSEP students whose worksite is in a different geographic location than that of the college in which enrolled each time they return to duty.

Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations

5 CFR, Part 410, §410.309—Waived to allow: (1) the STRLs to determine if a service agreement is required and if so, the period of required service for students employed under the demo; (2) the Commanding Officer or the STRL Director to waive in whole or in part a right of recovery; and (3) allow students to sign a service agreement up to three times the length of the training.

5 CFR part 575, Subparts A and B—Recruitment and Relocation Incentives. Waived to the extent necessary to allow employees hired and positions under the SSEP program to be treated as employees and positions under the General Schedule and to allow relocation incentives to be paid to SSEP students whose worksite is in a different geographic location than that of the college in which enrolled each time they return to duty.

Appendix B

STRLs Federal Register Notice of Approval of a Demonstration Project Plan


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRL</th>
<th>Federal Register notice</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Force Research Laboratory</td>
<td>61 FR 60400 amended by 75 FR 53076.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army Research Laboratory</td>
<td>63 FR 10680.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications-Electronics Research, Development, and Engineering Center</td>
<td>66 FR 54872.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer Research and Development Center</td>
<td>63 FR 14580.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Research and Material Command</td>
<td>63 FR 10440.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval Research Laboratory</td>
<td>64 FR 33970.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Part 2. STRLs Authorized by Section 1105 of the FY 2010 NDAA, Public Law 111–84

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRL</th>
<th>Federal Register notice</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center</td>
<td>76 FR 3744.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgewood Chemical Biological Center</td>
<td>74 FR 68936.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center</td>
<td>74 FR 68448.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval Air Systems Command Warfare Centers, Weapons and Aircraft Divisions.</td>
<td>76 FR 8530.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Naval Research</td>
<td>75 FR 77380.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center, Atlantic and Pacific.</td>
<td>76 FR 1924.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center</td>
<td>76 FR 12508.</td>
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</table>

Appendix C

Qualification Standards for STRL Student Trainee Positions

This standard describes the qualification requirements for the STEM Student Employment Program (SSEP) participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade/level</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS–2 or Demo Equivalent</td>
<td>Completion of high school or GED diploma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS–3 or Demo Equivalent</td>
<td>Completion of 1 full academic year of post-high school study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS–4 or Demo Equivalent</td>
<td>Completion of 2 full academic years of post-high school study or an associate's degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS–5 or Demo Equivalent</td>
<td>Completion of 4 academic years of post-high school leading to a bachelor's or equivalent degree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army

Withdrawal of Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Chuitna Coal Mine Project, Alaska

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent; withdrawal.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), on January 4, 2011, the Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) initiated the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to identify and analyze potential impacts associated with the proposed Chuitna Coal Mine Project to assist in evaluating a Department of the Army permit application pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. On March 30, 2017, the applicant announced its decision to suspend pursuit of permitting efforts on the project. Therefore, the Corps is terminating the EIS process, and is withdrawing the Notice of Intent published in the Tuesday, January 4, 2011, issue of the Federal Register.


FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding this action can be addressed by Jason Berkner, Regulatory Division, by telephone: (907) 753–5778 (toll free from within Alaska: (800) 478–2712), by fax: (907) 753–5567, by email: Jason.Berkner@usace.army.mil, or by mail: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEPOA–RD, Post Office Box 6898, JBER, Alaska 99506–0898.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: PacRim Coal, LP, requested Corps authorization, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, to develop the Chuitna Coal Project (Project), which was comprised of three components: the mine site, the project infrastructure, and the marine port. The Project consisted of mining a 5,050-acre lease tract with coal reserves of approximately 300 million tons of sub-bituminous ultra-low sulfur coal. The Project, as proposed, would have resulted in the discharge of dredged and/or fill material into an approximate total of 2,550 acres of waters of the U.S., including wetlands, 26 miles of streams, and marine waters. Due to the potentially significant environmental effects associated with the Project, on January 4, 2011, the Corps issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS (76 FR 336). The EIS would have also assessed issues related to the Alaska Surface Coal Mining Control and Reclamation Act (ASCMCRA) permit, which governs all aspects of the coal mining operation and infrastructure. On November 2, 2016, the Corps administratively withdrew the PacRim Coal, LP application for the Project pending State of Alaska’s completeness determination on the ASCMCRA application. A complete ASCMCRA application would have confirmed availability of the information required by the Corps to enable informed public comment and review of the DA permit application, and development of the EIS. On March 30, 2017, the applicant announced its decision to suspend pursuit of permitting efforts on the Project.

Therefore, in accordance with Corps regulations at 33 CFR part 230, Appendix C(2) and 33 CFR part 325, Appendix B(g), the Corps is terminating the EIS process, and is withdrawing the January 4, 2011, notice of intent to prepare an EIS for the proposal.

Dated: June 19, 2017.
Sheila Newman, Chief, Special Actions Branch.

BILLING CODE 5720–58–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; International Research and Studies Program—Research, Studies, and Surveys

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2017 for the International Research and Studies Program, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.017A.


If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The International Research and Studies (IRS) Program provides grants to institutions, public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals to conduct research and