UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

July 3, 2008

The Honorable David S.C. Chu
Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel
4000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-4000

Dear Dr. Chu:

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is granting direct-hire authority (DHA) for positions at the Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center (RIA-JMTC). This DHA will allow RIA-JMTC to fill wage grade positions in support of the Army's mission in Iraq and Afghanistan.

By regulation, OPM may decide independently that a severe shortage of candidates exists. The situation at RIA-JMTC meets the definition and requirements in 5 CFR 337.204(b)(1-8) based on a severe shortage of candidates. RIA-JMTC is situated in a competitive labor market which includes employers such as Alcoa and John Deere. The presence of these competitors for the same pool of workers has hampered RIA-JMTC's ability to vie for needed talent. This logistics and manufacturing facility must be capable of producing quality combat armored vehicle materials, weapon system components and field support equipment in support of the current conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan. The materials used by this facility provide protection for soldiers against enemy fire such as machine guns and explosive devices. The work performed is unique (not commonly found in the private sector) and demands attention-to-detail with strict standards that must be adhered to 100 percent of production time because this equipment provides for the safety and life of American soldiers.

RIA-JTMC has used the competitive process as well as: the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) authority, Veteran's Recruitment Appointments (VRA), the Student Career Experience Program, and the Always a Soldier Program. You have established partnership with the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, used open-continuous announcements, newspaper advertisements, publicized through outreach efforts and community groups, and you developed a 4-year Machinist Apprentice Training Program. This coupled with an increase of approximately 143 positions to be filled supports your request for direct hire authority under 5 CFR subpart B .

Your authority reads:

DoD-010 issued on the date of this letter, for Wage Grade employees as depicted below at the Department of Defense, Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center (RIA-JMTC). This authority is based on a severe shortage of candidates to fill

vacancies quickly to provide safety and life support to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. This direct-hire authority expires **December 31, 2009**.

Position Title	Series/Grade
Machinist	WG-3414-10
Welder	WG-3703-10
Welding Worker	WG-3703-08
Nondestructive Tester	WG-3705-11
Industrial Radiographer and Nondestructive Tester Specialist	WG-5439-12
Production Machinery Mechanic	WG-5350-11
Electronic Industrial Control Mechanic	WG-2606-12
Machine Tool Work Inspector	WG-3401-12
Furnace Operator	WG-3741-05/08/10
Molder	WG-4373-05/08/10

Using this DHA:

You may use this authority to make competitive service career, career-conditional, term, or temporary appointments, as appropriate, without regard to provisions of 5 U.S.C. 3309-3318 or 5 CFR part 211 and part 337, subpart A. These appointments are subject to public notice requirements in 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330 and 5 CFR part 330, including the displaced employee procedures found at 5 CFR part 330, subpart G, and requirements in 5 CFR 332.407. In addition, DoD must comply with all relevant laws to the extent that they are not exempted from such laws pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3304(a)(3). Further, we ask that you continue to make employment offers to qualified candidates with veterans' preference whenever possible.

OPM Oversight

You must use two authority codes with documenting personnel actions using this direct-hire authority. The first code "AYM" automatically fills in "Reg. 337.201" on the Notification of Personnel Action, Standard Form 50. The second authority code "BYO" identifies your use of this agency-specific authority. Using these two authority codes will help us evaluate the use of the authority without requiring agency reports. On a periodic basis OPM will determine if continued use is supportable. DoD may request an extension by providing information that demonstrates continued vigorous recruitment efforts, and increased workload requirements to support soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We are confident this authority will help you to fill these critical positions. If you have questions about this direct-hire authority, please contact Darlene Phelps on (202) 606-1730 or e-mail at: Darlene.Phelps@opm.gov.

Sincerely,

Linda M. Springer
Director