Dear RAND Staffing Office:

As a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) for the last eight years, I transferred and adapted the skill set acquired while pursuing my PhD in Chemical engineering to a broad set of research problems. Specifically relevant to the job posting: I have demonstrated experience in defense acquisition, modeling, and quantitative analysis. My work in defense acquisition required the independent evaluation of operational tests, the application of reliability growth analysis and design of experiments, and the administration and analysis of survey data. Nearly all aspects of my work at IDA has required the use of statistical tools, such as Monte Carlo simulation. I have demonstrated quantitative modeling in studying the scope of infectious disease through transit networks. Most recently, I have focused on the modeling and simulation of chemical and biological hazard plumes. All projects that I have worked on share a common theme: I learn about a sponsor’s problem, help the sponsor hone research-appropriate questions, create analytic solutions, and then help the sponsor understand the solutions.

As with RAND research positions, my current work requires the production of unbiased analytic products, typically produced through the coordination of a multi-disciplinary team. And simply performing analysis is of little value if not well-communicated to the sponsor. Of course my work with DoD and DHS has required sponsor engagement to communicate interim and final results.

Sharing knowledge is a highlight of my work—not just to sponsors but also internally. One aspect of my current job that I expect to extend to work at RAND is strong collaboration between staff. I greatly value and take advantage of others’ experience. I also enjoy mentoring new staff and research assistants.

Why I want to work at RAND: Recently, at a MORS wargaming conference, I attended a talk by RAND’s David Shlapak on his work assessing NATO’s defense posture in the Baltics. I was very impressed with the scoping of the research problem, analytic approach, and presentation of results. I commonly use RAND publications as reference material, and after this inspiring talk, I began to look more closely at the approach and structure of RAND reports. In focusing on general research approaches opposed to specific citable detail, the RAND reports that I read not only provided clearly scoped objective analysis, but the reports distilled information in to clear and actionable information. I want to be a part of this caliber of research and analysis.

I have uploaded the requested writing samples. Unfortunately, nearly all of my work is not approved for release by sponsor design. However, if of interest, can provide my performance reviews for the last several years to the staffing office. While the DC office would be very convenient for my current location, I am open to the possibility of relocating.

Sincerely,

Charles Snyder