Virginia Beach Economic Development Welcomes Orca AI Defense to International Incubator



VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – Virginia Beach Economic Development (VBED) today announced that Orca AI Defense, the U.S. subsidiary of global maritime technology company Orca AI, has established its first U.S. office as a new tenant of the Virginia Beach International Incubator, further strengthening the city's position as a hub for defense innovation, autonomous systems and maritime technology.

Headquartered in London, Orca AI has developed AI-powered maritime navigation technology that enhances situational

awareness, improves vessel navigation, and helps prevent collisions. The company's commercial platform has achieved TRL 9 status and is currently deployed on more than 1,500 commercial vessels worldwide, leveraging more than 120 million nautical miles of operational data.

Building on this proven technology, Orca AI Defense adapts the platform for national security and maritime protection applications. Using advanced cameras, computer vision, real-time object tracking, and automated alerts, the technology helps identify potential threats, improve operational response, detect dark vessels and other low profile maritime activity. The platform is designed to support organizations including the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, ports, defense contractors, and autonomous and unmanned systems manufacturers.

The U.S. expansion is being led by Alon Shantzer, Vice President of Business Growth for Orca AI Defense, who currently serves as the organization's first U.S.-based employee.

"This expansion represents a pivotal moment for Orca AI Government & Defense as we bring our cutting-edge maritime intelligence directly to the US market. We are deeply grateful to Virginia Beach Economic Development and the local government for their incredible support, which has been instrumental in making this strategic move a reality," shared Shantzer.

The decision to locate in Virginia Beach followed an introduction between Orca AI Defense and Virginia Beach Economic Development at Eurosatory in Paris in June 2026. Within weeks, company leadership visited Virginia Beach and the Hampton Roads region, meeting with local defense companies, military stakeholders, and regional partners to explore collaboration opportunities. Less than two months after the initial meeting, Orca AI Defense joined the Virginia

Beach International Incubator as the company's first U.S. location and fifth global office.

"Virginia Beach is proud to welcome Orca AI Defense to our expanding maritime and defense-technology ecosystem," said Emily Archer, Director of Virginia Beach Economic Development. "Orca AI Defense's advanced capabilities in autonomous maritime systems will support our extensive network of defense installations, security partners, and unmanned-systems innovators. We look forward to assisting the company with its first U.S. presence at the Virginia Beach International Incubator and introducing its proven commercial technology into the regional national-security sector."

In addition to establishing operations in the city, the company is exploring pilot programs and strategic partnerships throughout the Hampton Roads defense and maritime ecosystem to accelerate technology integration. As demand for the company's defense technology continues to grow, Orca AI Defense is actively recruiting a business development director and expects to expand its Virginia Beach employees.

The Virginia Beach International Incubator provides international companies with a strategic launch pad as they enter the U.S. market, offering direct access to one of the nation's largest concentrations of military installations, maritime industries, advanced manufacturers, and technology companies.

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