



Annual Report 2025

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This report was developed by the Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority and does not represent the official position of any Virginia government agency or the Governor.

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<https://www.energy.virginia.gov/offshore-wind/VOWDA.shtml>



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Introduction

The Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA) supports the efforts by the Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy), the Federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Dominion Energy, and other stakeholders to help accelerate offshore wind development projects off the coast of Virginia, address environmental and financial issues, and create port and supply chain economic opportunities.

VOWDA's 2025 Annual Report addresses the activities VOWDA has undertaken since its 2024 Annual Report. This report represents a high-level overview of the meetings of the full VOWDA membership, as well as those of several subgroups, which were formed to help inform and execute VOWDA's 2024 Work Plan and to provide informed recommendations based on input from subject matter experts.

This year, members discussed several topics, including:

- Current legislation on OSW and any updates needed
- The board's yearly activities and transitioning members
- Recommendations to update the VOWDA code
- Research and recommendations on OSW workforce training and preparedness
- Research and Development needs and recommendations

Based on activities and accomplishments in 2024-2025, the Authority makes the following recommendations for 2025-2026 to further advance offshore wind development and related supply chain activities in Virginia. The recommendations are ranked in order of priority.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:

Continue to support the current Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) Commercial project and Dominion Energy's recently acquired CVOW South, and other future projects, including the 176,500 acre lease area to the east of the current CVOW lease area through public meetings, comments on BOEM documents and reports and other federal actions, facilitating the resolution of potential use conflicts with all stakeholders, and working towards meeting the current all of the above strategy defined in the Virginia Energy Plan 2022.

Recommendation 2:

Continue to work with all stakeholders to create a regional supply chain and workforce for the CVOW Commercial, CVOW South, and future offshore wind projects. Collaborate with offshore wind project developers and manufacturers, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, universities, workforce councils, the Virginia Port Authority, the Virginia Maritime Association, the Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina SMART-POWER collaborative, and other stakeholders to promote existing Virginia companies and attract new ones as part of the supply chain for offshore wind.

Recommendation 3:

Continue to actively solicit and support research, development, and innovation opportunities and activities to reduce the cost and risk of developing wind resources and the supply chain and leveraging Virginia Energy's federal offshore research lease area in conformance with existing agreements. Work with Virginia colleges and research universities to promote the benefits of using other areas adjacent to or important for wind research, e.g., impacts of hurricanes, impacts on marine and avian life, and commercial and recreational fishing.



Recommendation 4:

Continue to work to identify and resolve barriers and find pathways to enable power off takers in the Commonwealth to meet their clean energy commitment with offshore wind. Additionally, continue to evaluate the federal developments and legislation in impacts to current and future offshore wind projects.

Recommendation 5:

Promote the continued refinement and deconfliction of BOEM's Central Atlantic Lease Areas off the East Coast in consultation with the Department of the Interior and all interested Virginia stakeholders.

As required by § 45.2-1808 of the Code of Virginia, the Authority submits this 13th annual report to the Governor and the Chairpersons of the House Appropriations Committee, the Senate Finance Committee, and the House and Senate Commerce and Labor Committees.



MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF VOWDA

The Virginia General Assembly created the Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA or the Authority) in 2010 for the purposes of facilitating, coordinating, and supporting the development of the offshore wind energy industry, offshore wind energy projects, and related supply chain opportunities. Code of Virginia § 45.2-1804 tasks the Authority with supporting Virginia offshore wind job creation and supply chain development, in cooperation with relevant local, state, and federal agencies and nongovernmental entities. A copy of the Authority's Mission Statement and Objectives can be found in *Appendix A*.

The Governor appoints up to nine non-legislative citizen members. The Director of Virginia Energy serves as the Director of the Authority, and Virginia Energy serves as staff to the Authority. The list of VOWDA Members is included as *Appendix B*.

The legislation requires the Authority to provide an annual summary of Authority activities and policy recommendations to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, the House Committee on Labor and Commerce, and the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor. For the 2024 VOWDA annual report, click here: [2023 VOWDA Annual Report](#).



2025 VOWDA ACTIVITIES

To accomplish its goals and objectives, the Authority regularly updates and works to implement a comprehensive work plan. To improve communications and coordination regarding VOWDA's work tasks and other state activities to facilitate the development of the offshore wind resource and supply chain, the Virginia Department of Energy staff held monthly calls with stakeholders listed in Objective 2 below.

In 2023-2024, VOWDA focused on five objectives. Members developed tasks to achieve these objectives, completing several activities this year that support offshore wind power development.

1. Accelerate the drive for resources and policies to ensure that the construction phase of the CVOW Commercial project takes place through 2025, with the last monopile installation completing by the end of 2025 and completion of up to 2,600 MW of wind energy off Virginia's shore in 2026.
2. Develop a coordinated policy, economic development, and workforce development strategy to incentivize and ensure offshore wind supply chain opportunities for Virginia. Collaborate with stakeholders, including Dominion Energy, Avangrid, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, universities, the Virginia Port Authority, the Virginia Maritime Association, Virginia and European manufacturers, and others to promote Virginia companies as part of the supply chain for offshore wind.
3. Actively solicit research and development opportunities and activities to reduce the cost and risk of developing the wind resource and supply chain, including leveraging the CVOW Commercial project and other uses of the Virginia Department of Energy's Research Lease in conformance with existing agreements.



4. Identify barriers and possible pathways to advance the offshore wind industry and enable potential power off-takers in the Commonwealth with clean energy commitments.
5. Work towards a multi-state regional supply chain cluster in Mid- and South Atlantic coastal states, offering the industry a larger pipeline of projects and a wide network of the best of what each state has to offer.

VOWDA held three regular meetings to discuss supply chain research and development needs and priorities. An overview of each meeting follows. Presentations from various stakeholders and subject matter experts at meetings can be viewed on the Authority's webpage at: <https://energy.virginia.gov/offshore-wind/Presentations.shtml>.

Meeting 1 - February 5, 2025

- The Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA) Board Meeting took place in Norfolk. The meeting began with the unanimous approval of previous minutes and focused principally on planning for 2025, legislative updates, and other business. The annual report had been finalized and submitted, with recommendations emphasizing the need to maintain momentum in the offshore wind supply chain and workforce development, as well as increasing R&D efforts to lower project costs. Updates were provided about the offshore Wind Grant program's narrow scope, resulting in three awarded grants and the reversion of unused funds to the state.
- Proposals for code revisions and the idea of consolidating workforce development for clean energy technologies were discussed, along with continued engagement with other councils.
- On legislative matters, most bills introduced for offshore wind in the General Assembly had failed, though HB1616, which proposes establishing an offshore wind industry workforce program and fund, remained under consideration. The board debated submitting a letter of support for HB1616 but opted against it.



- Additional topics included the upcoming need for chair and vice-chair elections and the suggestion to eliminate the long-vacant Space Flight Authority seat via future code revisions.

Meeting 2 - April 17, 2025

- The Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA) Board Meeting was held virtually via Teams on June 5, 2025. The meeting centered around vacant board seats, review and finalization of VOWDA code edits, and board administrative transitions.
- DOE staff had compiled code edit suggestions—shared in advance—which the board reviewed section by section. Administrative updates included the resignation of Howard Shafferman, notification of two vacant seats, and members Will, Eileen, and Ashley reapplying after their term expirations.
- With the notification of Chair Will Fediw having stepped down, Ashley McLeod was unanimously elected as the new chair. Chris Gullickson was unanimously elected as vice-chair. The board resolved to discuss the Annual Report at the next meeting and share finalized code edits with administration for guidance on bills and legislative changes. No public comments were made.

Meeting 3 - September 3, 2025

- The meeting opened with an update from Director Davis of the Department of Energy, who outlined Virginia’s continued pursuit of an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy that includes wind, solar, natural gas, nuclear, and small modular reactors, driven by rapidly increasing electricity demand, now projected at 6–9% annual growth compared to 1–2% in 2020. Director Davis highlighted progress on SMR initiatives by Dominion and AEP, as well as the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project, which remains on time and on budget aside from external factors such as tariffs and PJM interconnection delays.



- Dominion Energy's update, delivered by Mr. John Larson, reinforced that the offshore wind project is progressing as planned, with the two turbines performing well and providing valuable operational experience. He noted that recent storm events have yielded important lessons, as the winds were lower than expected, while the sea conditions were more severe. Mr. Larson also addressed workforce challenges across the energy sector, pointing to ongoing efforts by workforce councils and related organizations to improve workforce readiness.
- The meeting also addressed governance and administrative matters, including a discussion on the 2025 Annual Report and VOWDA code edits. Members agreed the report could be shared once final edits and the cover letter were completed. DOE staff presented compiled feedback on proposed VOWDA code edits, and the group reviewed it together. The board agreed to identify a senator, following the elections, to sponsor the VOWDA code updates in the next General Assembly.
- Public comments were provided by Thomas Turner of Conservatives for Clean Energy, who shared findings from a 26-state study examining environmental and economic connections between offshore energy development and offshore wind that can support healthy marine ecosystems and poses minimal risk to marine life, countering common misconceptions. Mr. Turner offered to share the study with the chair and provide additional information as requested.
- The meeting concluded with agreed next steps, including finalizing the annual report, and confirming that the next meeting will be held in Richmond on November 12, 2025, with staff coordinating logistics.



APPENDIX A - MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Mission Statement

The Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (the "**Authority**") is created as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth for the purpose of facilitating, coordinating, and supporting the development (either by the Authority or by other qualified entities) of the offshore wind energy industry, offshore wind energy projects, and supply chain vendors by:

1. Collecting relevant metocean and environmental data;
2. Identifying existing state and regulatory or administrative barriers to the development of the offshore wind energy industry;
3. Working in cooperation with relevant local, state, and federal agencies to upgrade port and other logistical facilities and sites to accommodate the manufacturing and assembly of offshore wind energy project components and vessels; and
4. Ensuring that the development of such wind power projects are compatible with other ocean uses and avian and marine resources, including both the possible interference with and positive effects on naval facilities and operations, NASA's Wallops Flight Facility operations, commercial shipping lanes, recreational and commercial fisheries, and avian and marine species and habitats.

The Authority shall, in cooperation with the relevant state and federal agencies as necessary, recommend ways to encourage and expedite the development of the offshore wind energy industry.

The Authority shall also consult with research institutions, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and stakeholders, as the Authority deems appropriate.



The Authority shall consider seeking grants and/or loan guarantees and/or entering public-private partnerships to assist in the development of offshore wind.

The Authority shall provide by October 15 each year an annual summary of the activities of the Authority and policy recommendations to the Governor, the Chairs of the House and Senate Commerce and Labor Committees, and the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees (the "Annual Report").

The Annual Report shall include specific policy recommendations that shall be derived from and supported by the actions, results, and deliberations of the Authority in carrying out its objectives listed below.

Objectives

A. Virginia Offshore Industry Data:

Facilitate the definition, collection, and dissemination of relevant metocean data, environmental data, and other information needed by Virginia offshore wind stakeholders, utilizing existing, planned, or projected sources of data collection or activities.

- 1) Direct and provide support to the Virginia Department of Energy to gather, reconcile, and disseminate information and data required for the development of the offshore wind industry and offshore wind facilities. Specifically, develop a strategy and action plan to:
 - a) Inventory the available information (e.g., wind data, environmental data, oceanographic data, sea current data, electricity transmission data, port and shipping data, DOD/Navy Coast Guard requirements, integration of the Chesapeake Light Tower, offshore LIDAR buoy data, wind turbine construction and operating cost data, etc.).
 - b) Gather stakeholder input regarding what information is required to support the offshore wind industry.



- c) Reduce gaps in information required versus information collected.
 - d) Collect, process, and disseminate this information to stakeholders.
- 2) Collect, monitor, and provide information regarding the delivered cost, rate impact, economic impact, and environmental benefits of electricity generated from offshore wind projects that consider existing studies, legislative and regulatory actions by the Commonwealth, federal government, and other states, and information provided by stakeholders and interested parties.
 - 3) Review, support/endorse, and possibly participate in federal grant applications and state efforts that support projects that will improve the offshore wind value chain to shorten completion times, reduce the delivered cost of power, and create job opportunities.

B. Offshore Leasing, Permitting, Financing, and Regulation:

Identify existing federal and state barriers to the development of the offshore wind industry in Virginia.

- 1) Define, identify, and provide information regarding:
 - a) Virginia's renewable energy goals with respect to offshore wind, as well as state and federal incentives for renewable energy development.
 - b) The current federal and state regulatory framework for the development, transmission, generation, and purchasing power for offshore wind in Virginia.
- 2) Develop a process to gather and validate stakeholder input regarding perceived and/or real federal and state regulatory and administrative barriers to the development of the offshore wind industry in Virginia and work with stakeholders to create action plans or strategies to remove or reduce those barriers.
- 3) Incorporate the results of these findings into the Annual Report.



C. Virginia Offshore Job Creation & Supply Chain Development:

Work in cooperation with relevant local, state, and federal agencies to accommodate the manufacturing, assembly, and maintenance of offshore wind energy project components and vessels.

- 1) Support the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) to:
 - a) Assess the competitiveness of Virginia for the location of manufacturing, assembly, portage, and service centers to support the offshore wind industry.
 - b) Define and implement strategies to attract industry to locate facilities in Virginia that will support the manufacturing, assembly, service, and transport resources required by the industry participants; and
 - c) Address the training and human resource requirements and the mechanism to provide the necessary human resources.
- 2) Consider incentives and/or policy initiatives needed to attract offshore-related business to Virginia to create employment opportunities and balance the delivered cost of offshore wind, and incorporate any recommendations regarding those incentives/policy initiatives into the Annual Report.



APPENDIX B – VOWDA MEMBERS

AUTHORITY MEMBERS

Ashley McLeod, Chair

Principal Consultant, ERM

Chris Gullickson, Vice Chair

Director, Economic Development, Virginia Port Authority

Will Fediw

Senior Vice President

Virginia Maritime Association

Joseph Nash

Energy and Environment Consultant

Kathleen P. Owens

Founder and President

Beach Development Group

Howard Shafferman

(Retired – 06/30/25)

Founder

Haswell Group, LLC

Douglas L. Faulkner

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(Appointed – 07/01/25)

President and Founder
Leatherstocking LLC

Bryan K. Stephens

President and CEO
Hampton Roads Chamber

Eileen Woll

Formerly Offshore Energy Program Director
Sierra Club