2006 General Assembly session: The Virginia Energy Plan was passed and the Virginia Coastal Energy Research Consortium (VCERC) was established.

Charge to VCERC: “…serve as an interdisciplinary study, research, and information resource for the Commonwealth on coastal energy issues…” and “…facilitate the application and transfer of new coastal energy technologies…” to commercial interest.

- Nine (originally five) university members:
  - College of William & Mary (VIMS)
  - George Mason University
  - Hampton University
  - James Madison University
  - Norfolk State University
  - Old Dominion University
  - University of Virginia
  - Virginia Commonwealth University
  - Virginia Tech (ARI)

- Other Board members:
  - DMME
  - VMRC
  - VA Manufacturers Association
  - VA Maritime Association
  - Hampton Roads Tech Council
  - Virginia Clean Cities Program
  - DEQ (Coastal Zone Program)
  - VA Maritime Association
  - NASA Langley Research Ctr.

2007 General Assembly Session: VCERC funded for a total of $1.5 million, with almost half going to the offshore wind research.

2008 General Assembly Session: VCERC funded for a total of $1.6 million with almost half going to the offshore wind research.

2009 – April: The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Minerals Management Service’s (MMS) sign an agreement placing offshore wind firmly under the purview of MMS. MMS begins finalizing guidelines to offshore wind in the U.S.

2009 – May: VCERC/Virginia Beach/SAIC host a Workshop on Wind, with invited stakeholders from the potential offshore wind industry, the Governor’s Administration, MMS, DOD/USN, utilities, and localities. This well attended event was a “101” on offshore wind in Virginia.


2009 – November: Creation of the Virginia Offshore Wind Coalition (VOW) – an industry group comprised of developers, supply chain companies, localities, and utilities. A legislative agenda was developed and bills are carried to successful passage in the General Assembly.

2009 – November: Virginia, Maryland and Delaware form the Mid-Atlantic Offshore Wind Cooperative Agreement.

2009 – December: the MMS/Virginia Taskforce constituted to start the offshore wind leasing process in federal waters off of Virginia, including coordination between federal, state, and local governments. This provided the forum to engage the Department of Defense on possible conflicting uses of the offshore waters.
2010 – General Assembly passes legislation creating the Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority. This legislation creates a body with the authority to manage PPEAs, accept contributions, grants, property, etc., and will be available to assist in smoothing the path to offshore wind in Virginia with state and federal agencies to mitigate barriers to offshore wind. It also has the authority to facilitate data collection, upgrade existing facilities (Ports, Chesapeake Light Tower), identify and facilitate any state barriers (permitting, etc.), and ensure that the interests of military, NASA, avian and marine wildlife are maintained.

2010 – General Assembly passes legislation to allow for 3 offshore renewable energy credits (ORECs) toward Renewable Energy Standards.

2010 – March: Federal General Services “surpluses” the Chesapeake Light Tower (CLT) and the City of Virginia Beach begins due diligence regarding acquiring the CLT for multiple uses, including offshore wind data gathering.

2010 – April: MMS/Virginia Taskforce meeting unveils vetted lease blocks, which have been provisionally approved by DOD. DOD representative, Lt. Col. Wash, USAF, was asked to consider more lease blocks, and agreed, but did not authorize use of blocks off of south Virginia Beach.

2010 – April: VCERC Final Report completed.

2010 – June: James Madison University hosts a three-day wind symposium. During breakout meetings, an alliance of stakeholders forms to develop the framework for a Virginia-based advanced technology demonstration project to be called the National Offshore Wind Technology Center (NOWTC).

2010 – June: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) releases an RFI for offshore wind stakeholders to provide information to DOE as they begin to develop their strategic plan for offshore wind in the U.S.

2010 – June: Virginia joins Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium, comprised of the Governors or their designees from each of the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. One of the main goals for the Consortium is to work to reduce the permitting timeline for approval of offshore wind projects. DOE’s Secretary Salazar agrees to work with the Consortium and pledges reductions in the timeline.

2010 – July: Virginia submits a coordinated response to the DOE RFI, along with approximately 40 Virginia stakeholders to offshore wind.

2010 – Bureau of Offshore Energy Management Regulation & Enforcement (BOEMRE, formerly MMS) works with the state to vet DOD provisionally approved lease blocks.

2010 – September: VCERC and VOW respond to the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing scoping meetings on updating EIS/OEIS to encourage the Navy to include areas within the study that might pertain to offshore wind farms and that the information is made available to BOEMRE as it moves forward with its EIS processes for offshore wind.

2010 – September: DOE releases its Draft Strategic Plan for Offshore Wind in the U.S. DOE hosts a webinar and then rolls out the plan with breakout sessions in Washington D.C. Feedback on the plan due back to DOE from stakeholders by October 29, 2010.
There are three major target areas within the DOE Draft Strategic Plan:

- Market Barrier Removal
- Technology Development
- Advanced Technology Demonstration Projects
  - Conceivably three projects for funding through DOE in FY ‘11.

Virginia well positioned to compete for Advanced Technology Demonstration Projects through the proposed National Offshore Wind Technology Center.

- **2010 – October:** The Commonwealth of Virginia submits its vetted lease blocks to BOEMRE for preparation of RFI for Virginia lease blocks for consideration by offshore wind developers. (Will be posted in the Federal Register, anticipated before year-end 2010.)

- **2010 – October:** The Commonwealth of Virginia finalizes “Permit by Rule” for offshore wind within state waters.

- **2010 – October:** American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) Offshore Wind Conference in Atlantic City, NJ. The Virginia Offshore Wind Coalition (VOW), Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), Hampton Road Economic Development Alliance (HREDA), and the Port of Virginia collaborated to host a Virginia-centric booth at this conference. Lieutenant Governor Bolling hosts dinner for potential supply chain companies. Interest in Virginia’s progress was great and our information well received.

- **2010 – October:** United Kingdom Trade & Investment (UKTI) asks VOW to provide a supply chain member for a November Supply Chain Trade Mission to Scotland.

- **2010 – October:** Gamesa / Northrop Grumman announcement of partnership to develop and test turbines.

- **2010 – October:** Virginia Governor’s First Annual Energy Conference is held. Governor McDonnell is the keynote speaker at the conference luncheon. He speaks favorably about offshore wind. (12:09 to 17:02 minutes)

- **2010 – October:** Core group (VCERC, VOW, VEDP, NREL) drafting business plan for National Offshore Wind Technology Center (NOWTC) and begins working closely with Gamesa / Northrop Grumman, NIA, NASA, and others to determine feasibility of partnering on NOWTC project.

- **2010 – October:** Appointments to the Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA) are announced.

- **2010 November:** Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar announces the “Smart from the Start” initiative intended to streamline the regulatory process.

- **2010 – December 7:** Inaugural VOWDA meeting is held. Two reports required by the VOWDA legislation are presented; the Meteorological Tower Placement Report and the Dominion Offshore Wind Study Report.

- **2010 – December:** DOE establishes a team to assess current offshore structures for use in offshore wind activities; includes the Chesapeake Light Tower in its assessment.
2011 – January: The City Council of Virginia Beach approves Mayor Will Sessoms’ request to collaborate with the Commonwealth of Virginia to commission a study of the Chesapeake Light Tower to determine the feasibility of retro-fitting as a metocean data tower.

2011 – February: Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu, and Secretary of Interior, Ken Salazar announce major new initiatives to accelerate offshore wind which include funding opportunities for advanced demonstration projects that would mitigates the cost of developing offshore wind energy.

2011 – February: Virginia General Assembly passes a resolution in favor of offshore wind energy development off the coast of Virginia.

2011 – June: A highly successful Virginia Offshore Wind Conference is held in Virginia Beach.

2011 – July: Atlantic Coast Port Access Route Study (ACPARS) is posted in the Federal Register. This is important to the development of offshore wind energy because the outer continental shelf (OCS) is shared by many entities, including the shipping industry and the U.S. Navy.

2011 – July: Draft Environmental Assessment by BOEMRE released for 30-day comment period.

2011 – September: Department of Energy Announces 41 Offshore Wind Power R&D Projects to Receive Energy Department Funding

2011 – October: AWEA Officially announces that the 2012 AWEA Offshore Wind Conference will be held in Virginia Beach

2012 – March: Department of Energy Announces $180 million in Ambitious New Initiative to Deploy U.S. Offshore Wind Projects

Links of interest re: Offshore Wind Energy Development

- Click here for a fact sheet on the National Offshore Wind Strategy
- Click here for the complete National Offshore Wind Strategy: Creating an Offshore Wind Industry in the United States
- Click here for more information on the Smart from the Start Initiative
- Click here for a map of the mid-Atlantic WEA’s

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