

Media Release

Davie Defense Inc. Unveils Plans for a Proposed \$1BN 'American Icebreaker Factory' to Build U.S. Coast Guard Arctic Security Cutters

September 10, 2025 – Davie Defense Inc., America's newest shipbuilder, today gave a first glimpse of the "American Icebreaker Factory", which could be developed at the historic Gulf Copper shipyard in Galveston, Texas.

The American Icebreaker Factory concept was produced in collaboration with Florida-based Pearlson, a renowned expert in shipyard design and program management. Pearlson has led major projects for leading American shipbuilders, including BAE Systems, Austal USA and Fincantieri Marinette.

The proposed American Icebreaker Factory embodies the Trump Administration's priorities, including the Executive Order on American Maritime Dominance, the SHIPS for America Act, and the creation of the Office of Shipbuilding.

"Recapitalization of the nation's icebreaker fleet and closing the shipbuilding gap with China are now clear national priorities," said Kai Skvarla, CEO of Davie Defense. "Our skills and capability are perfectly matched to address these imperatives and deliver the ships America needs to protect our vital interests in the polar regions."

The proposed American Icebreaker Factory would be the biggest increase in new U.S. shipbuilding capacity for decades. A purpose-built facility to build new U.S. Coast Guard ships like the Arctic Security Cutter (ASC). It will be backed by the unrivalled expertise of Finland's Helsinki Shipyard – Davie Defense's sister company, the world-leading icebreaker builder which has delivered 100% of the complex polar icebreakers delivered from Finland over the past 25 years¹. It is currently building the Polar Max, which when delivered to the Canadian government by 2030, will be among the world's most advanced and powerful icebreakers.

Skvarla said: "While others run the same old playbook and expect different results, Davie Defense is executing new and innovative ways to deliver world-class outcomes: we are building polar

¹ In this context, icebreakers capable of breaking 5ft of level ice at 3 knots or higher

icebreakers to a fixed schedule, planning to make significant investments in U.S. shipyard capacity, and recruiting thousands of American shipbuilders. Using our unique knowledge and expertise, the American Icebreaker Factory will deliver Finnish levels of icebreaker production efficiency right here in the U.S., helping address vital national security needs and strengthening American shipbuilding.”

A Boost for American Shipbuilding

Once strategic shipbuilding programs are secured, Davie Defense could directly support over 2,000 skilled jobs and over 7,000 jobs throughout the supply chain at these facilities, according to a new independent study. Davie Defense also recently announced its plans to purchase Gulf Copper's Texas facilities, which could host the American Icebreaker Factory.

One Credible Solution Exists to Plug the Acute American Icebreaker Gap

With just three polar icebreakers – and the flagship Polar Security Cutter still not delivered – America’s need for new Arctic ships is urgent. Adversaries are surging: Russia has over 40 polar icebreakers and China is rapidly expanding its fleet. Davie Defense will bring new U.S. capacity and proven designs online fast.

The Davie Defense Arctic Security Cutter is a proven fourth-generation design for a real polar icebreaker. Seven vessels already in service. The platform is ready to build and fully aligned with all USCG mission requirements. Davie Defense, in partnership with Helsinki Shipyard, can deliver the first ASC in 26 months.

Skvarla concluded: “Our purpose is about investing to create new, efficient capacity in the U.S. and rapidly delivering the ships America needs. We have already built the ASC hull seven times over. This means we can build new American ASCs quickly and transfer Finland’s unrivalled icebreaker know-how to the United States. This will help the U.S. find a better way to field new naval capabilities via proven shipbuilding solutions based on enduring business models and flexible designs that evolve as the needs of the nation change.”

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About Davie Defense

Davie Defense Inc. is a proud American shipbuilder and part of Inoce, a privately-owned British marine industrial group with operations in the United States, Finland and Canada. Together these facilities design, build and maintain mission-critical vessels, from icebreakers and warships to ferries and cruise ships. Canada's Davie Shipbuilding is building the world's largest orderbook of heavy icebreakers and Finland's Helsinki Shipyard is the recognized global leader in icebreaker construction. Gulf Copper & Manufacturing, a leading Texas-based ship repair and fabrication company, could be the home of The American Icebreaker Factory, which will be the first U.S. facility purpose-built to deliver polar ships at speed and scale. www.daviedefense.com

Bio: Mr. Kai Skvarla, CEO of Davie Defense Inc.

Kai Skvarla is the CEO of Davie Defense Inc., the next-generation American shipbuilding business leading the transformation of Gulf Copper's Galveston yard into "The American Icebreaker Factory." Born and raised in the United States, Kai has spent over 25 years at the crossroads of maritime strategy, engineering, and national security. He began his career as a naval architect and marine engineer, designing ships for the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. Later, as the Major Acquisition Shipbuilding Program Manager for the U.S. Coast Guard's National Security Cutter program, Kai delivered the lead ship of this flagship initiative for building capable, multi-mission vessels. Kai then spent 11 years at BMT Designers & Planners, ultimately serving as President and driving strong growth in naval architecture and marine engineering. More recently, Kai led Serco's International Maritime Programs, scaling global maritime operations and developing partnerships. At Davie Defense, Kai oversees Davie's U.S. operations, including industrial expansion, program delivery, and alignment of specialized shipbuilding expertise from Canada and Finland to enhance U.S. capabilities.