Shield AI V-BAT Selected as Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force’s First Maritime ISR Platform

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WASHINGTON (January 22, 2025) – Shield AI, the defense technology company building an AI-powered autonomy software platform and tools for the world, announced today that its V-BAT unmanned aircraft system (UAS) has been selected by the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) as the country’s first-ever maritime-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platform. V-BAT will provide advanced ISR capabilities to JMSDF surface vessels, reinforcing Japan’s defense posture and operational readiness in the Indo-Pacific region.

This milestone deal represents the beginning of a planned

multi-year stream of increasing V-BAT orders to support JMSDF operations. Under the agreement, the JMSDF will acquire multiple V-BAT UAS from Shield AI, enhancing the surveillance and intelligence-gathering capabilities of its surface vessels.

“Japan is a vital ally in the Indo-Pacific and critical to regional deterrence efforts, and this partnership strengthens Japan’s ability to respond effectively to crises and ensures they are equipped with a reliable and proven platform for maritime ISR missions,” said Brandon Tseng, Shield AI’s President, Co-founder, and former Navy SEAL. “The JMSDF’s selection of V-BAT reflects their understanding of the future of warfare—where operational success requires blending high-cost assets with intelligent, affordable unmanned systems like V-BAT. Every U.S. and allied maritime vessel should be equipped with V-BAT to provide shipborne ISR capabilities wherever and whenever they are needed, and it’s fantastic to be making that vision a reality with JMSDF.”

The V-BAT is the only single-engine ducted-fan vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) UAS operationally deployed in multiple regions globally. With its unique ducted fan design and the ability to launch and recover in confined spaces, it is ideally suited for shipborne and austere environments, ensuring flexibility and resilience in complex missions. V-BAT has earned its reputation for reliability, operating with impunity even in GPS- and comms-denied environments. Its proven performance in contested regions like Ukraine, the Black Sea, and the Indo-Pacific demonstrates its ability to withstand advanced electronic warfare threats that have grounded many traditional drones.

Delivering the strategic capabilities of much more expensive aircraft, V-BAT excels in missions ranging from ISR to strategic targeting, search-and-rescue, and maritime interdiction. Its versatility and cutting-edge autonomous features make it a critical asset in modern defense

operations.