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Volato Group Names Chris Ensey Chief Executive Officer Following Completion of Alignment Engine Merger

Infrastructure veteran to lead a new model for American AI infrastructure — community-anchored industrial campuses that pair sovereign AI compute with manufacturing and re-industrialization, beginning with 154 MW available today in Ohio and a roadmap to 480 MW

NORTH CANTON, Ohio--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Volato Group, Inc. (NYSE American: SOAR) ("Volato" or the "Company") today announced that Chris Ensey was appointed Chief Executive Officer, effective September 11, 2026, immediately following the closing of the Company's merger with Alignment Engine Inc. ("Alignment Engine"). In connection with the merger, Alignment Engine was valued at approximately \$500 million and the merger marks the Company's entry into AI infrastructure, combining Alignment Engine's powered industrial campus in Ohio with Volato's publicly traded platform.

Ensey has led Alignment Engine as CEO since early 2023 and has been an early investor in the company. His nearly two decades of experience building secure computing platforms and large-scale digital infrastructure have shaped a clear vision of how to build the next generation of American AI capacity. He sees it not as isolated server farms, but as productive industrial campuses that strengthen the communities and supply chains around them. He views compute not as commodity capacity, but as sovereign compute that enterprises can trust with their most valuable data.

A New Model: AI Infrastructure That Rebuilds American Industry

The prevailing approach to AI data centers treats power, land and communities as inputs to be consumed. We are pursuing a different model. The Company aims to develop powered industrial campuses where AI compute anchors a broader mix of manufacturing and industrial activity—optimizing energy, water and thermal infrastructure, creating durable skilled jobs, and returning long-dormant industrial sites to productive use. In this model, a data center is the economic engine that makes new American manufacturing viable alongside it. The Company views this community-positive approach as a competitive advantage: projects that create local prosperity get built faster, retain talent, and earn the long-term support that multi-decade infrastructure requires.

The Ohio campus is the first expression of that thesis. With 154 MW of power available today, a roadmap to 480 MW, the site pairs the scarcest resources in AI—energized capacity—with an industrial footprint designed to host complementary manufacturing and re-industrialization uses over time.

Sovereign Compute for the Enterprise

The Company's commercial strategy is built around a shift it believes is now underway in enterprise AI: as models move from experimentation into core operations, control of data, infrastructure and model behavior is becoming a board-level requirement. Enterprises increasingly want AI capacity that is sovereign—physically located in the United States, contractually dedicated rather than shared, auditable end to end, and operated by a counterparty they trust with regulated and proprietary data. Volato intends to serve that demand directly, offering dedicated GPU capacity with the control, transparency and security posture that hyperscale multi-tenant clouds are not structured to provide. Ensey's background in national-security-grade cybersecurity—from designing security architectures for classified U.S. government networks early in his career to serving as Chief Technology Officer of cyber defense firm BlueVoyant—informs the Company's trust-and-safety-first approach to enterprise AI infrastructure.

Experience Built for This Moment

Ensey's career pairs rapid infrastructure delivery with public-company leadership and hands-on operation of AI-scale data platforms. He led the design and deployment of a 105 MW compute facility in Hardin, Montana that reached full capacity in under a year—the milestone site in Marathon Digital Holdings' (NASDAQ: MARA) rise to a leading position in North American digital infrastructure. As CEO and COO of Riot Blockchain (NASDAQ: RIOT), he deployed the company's first 40 MW, restructured and recapitalized the business through a severe market downturn, and worked directly with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on early industry policy. As Chief Technology Officer of BlueVoyant, a global cyber defense company founded by veterans of the NSA, FBI and GCHQ, he led the global engineering organization responsible for the petabyte-scale, machine-learning-driven data pipeline at the core of its threat intelligence platform. That role gave him direct operating experience with data-intensive AI systems and with the security requirements of some of the world's most demanding enterprise and government customers. Across each chapter, he has delivered the two things the AI infrastructure market rewards most: speed to power and disciplined execution.

"The AI buildout is a once-in-a-generation chance to rebuild America's industrial base, and we intend to build it differently," said Chris Ensey, Chief Executive Officer of Volato. "Our campuses are designed to make the towns around them stronger—pairing AI compute with manufacturing, optimizing energy usage, and creating skilled jobs that last. And for the enterprises that run on our capacity, we offer what the shared cloud cannot: sovereign compute they control, operated by people who have spent their careers protecting the most sensitive networks in the country."

"Chris is the right leader for where Volato is going," said Matt Liotta, Chairman of the Board of Volato Group, Inc. "He has built large-scale computing infrastructure, led public companies and developed secure technology platforms, but what sets him apart is his ability to turn ambitious ideas into operating assets. That combination of vision and execution is exactly what Volato needs for its next chapter. The Board has full confidence in Chris and in his ability to lead the Company through the opportunity ahead."

Why It Matters for Volato

The AI data center market was valued at approximately \$147.3 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach \$810.6 billion by 2033, representing a compound annual growth rate of 23.9%, according to Grand View Research. Capturing that opportunity depends on turning powered land into revenue-generating compute quickly, efficiently and in a way communities and enterprise customers can support for decades. Under Ensey's leadership, the combined company intends to pursue phased GPU deployments at the Ohio campus—prioritizing computational output per unit of energy through advanced cooling and intelligent resource utilization, and pairing that physical infrastructure with Alignment Engine's proprietary NeuralSync technology for accelerator coordination. The Company plans to sell capacity directly to enterprise AI customers while continuing to operate its aviation software business, including the Parslee autonomous-work platform and the Vaunt private aviation membership marketplace.

About Volato Group, Inc.

Volato Group, Inc. (NYSE American: SOAR) is an AI infrastructure and software company. Through its Alignment Engine subsidiary, Volato is developing a powered industrial campus in Ohio into a next-generation AI compute facility, combining data center infrastructure, high-density GPU compute, high-performance networking and proprietary technology to support energy-efficient AI training, inference and HPC workloads. Volato also builds operational systems for aviation businesses on Parslee, an autonomous-work platform that combines business context, shared memory and human-in-the-loop controls, and operates Vaunt, one of the fastest-growing technology-enabled private aviation membership platforms in the industry.

About Alignment Engine

Alignment Engine is an AI infrastructure company developing high-performance computing infrastructure for artificial intelligence, machine learning and HPC workloads. The company combines powered data center infrastructure, advanced compute, high-performance networking and proprietary technology to support energy-efficient AI workloads. Alignment Engine is headquartered in Ohio and is developing its campus as a next-generation AI compute facility.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding the anticipated benefits of the completed merger; the combined company's business strategy and development of AI infrastructure; planned GPU, data center and high-performance computing infrastructure deployments; anticipated power, cooling and water efficiency; the size, growth and future development of the market for AI data center infrastructure; commercial discussions and future customer agreements; proposed financing activities; the anticipated conversion of the merger consideration; future stockholder and NYSE American approvals; and the combined company's ability to execute its growth strategy.

Forward-looking statements can often be identified by words such as "expects," "anticipates," "intends," "plans," "believes," "seeks," "estimates," "projects," "targets," "would," "will," "should," "could," "may," "potential," "opportunity" and the negative of these terms or other similar expressions, but the absence of these words does not mean that a statement is not

forward-looking.

Forward-looking statements are based on current expectations, assumptions, estimates and projections and are not guarantees of future performance or events. Actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements as a result of various risks and uncertainties, including risks associated with integrating Alignment Engine's business; obtaining additional financing; procuring GPUs and other equipment; developing and operating AI infrastructure; obtaining sufficient power and other infrastructure; satisfying existing or future customer commitments; converting customer discussions into definitive agreements; obtaining required stockholder and NYSE American approvals; maintaining compliance with NYSE American listing standards; the risk that third-party market size and growth projections prove inaccurate or that the Company does not benefit from any growth in the market; volatility in the Company's common stock; and the other risks described in the Company's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and subsequent reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

All forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made. Volato undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law.

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