

## **Martin P5M-1G/2G *Marlin***



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### **History:**

The Coast Guard acquired seven of the P5M-1G flying-boats directly from the Glenn L. Martin Company beginning in October 1953, although the first did not enter Coast Guard service until 20 November 1953. The service then acquired four of the new P5M-2G flying boats, distinguished from their earlier brethren by their high-mounted vertical stabilizer (referred to as a "T" tail), beginning in 1961, according to Percy. Photos in the Coast Guard Historian's Office files, however, indicate that some were delivered as early as 1955. These four P5M-2G's were based at air stations St. Petersburg, San Diego, and San Francisco. Two P5Ms eventually served with Air Detachment Bermuda.

The P5Ms primarily flew off shore to rescue injured seamen off of merchant or fishing vessels and returning them to shore for medical treatment. For example, on 5 July 1957 a P5M Martin seaplane from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station, San Francisco made an offshore landing at the extreme operating range of 950 miles southwest of San Francisco to remove a seriously ill seaman, who had been transferred from the merchant vessel *Kirribilli* to USS *George*.

With the decrease in the need for such medical evacuations far out to sea and the high cost in operating these large flying boats, the P5Ms were transferred to the Navy between May and December in 1960.

The P5M Marlin was the last flying boat in the Coast Guard's inventory.





Martin P5M-1G; no caption; dated 21 May 1953; copied from color slide; Slide No. LS-231-X; photographer unknown.

A Coast Guard P5M-1G making a JATO-assisted take off at an unknown location.



Martin P5M-1G; no caption/date/photo number; copied from a color transparency; photographer unknown.



Martin P5M-1G; no caption/date/photo number; copied from a color transparency; photographer unknown.



Martin P5M-2G; "Complete Assem. - Starboard Side."; 28 December 1955;  
Photo No. A-76464; photographer unknown.

Pearcy indicates that the P5M-2G's entered the Coast Guard's inventory in 1961 but this photo shows a delivery of No. 1312 in December of 1955. Note the attached beaching gear and auxiliary power cart.



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**Sources:**

P5M file, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office Archive.

Richard A. Hoffman. "Marlins in the Coast Guard." *Mariner/Marlin Association Newsletter*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (March 2005), pp. 1-4.

Arthur Percy, *U.S. Coast Guard Aircraft Since 1916* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1991), pp. 251-253.

Gordon Swanborough & Peter M. Bowers. *United States Navy Aircraft Since 1911* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990-third edition), pp. 360-362.

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