

## *U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

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# **Casco, 1949**



WHEC-370

Radio call sign: NICB

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The *Casco* was named for a bay on the coast of Maine.

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Builder: Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Puget Sound, WA

Commissioned: 27 Dec 1941 (USN)  
19 Apr 1949 (USCG)

Decommissioned: 21 Mar 1969; Transferred to USN; expended as a target

### **PARTICULARS, AS OF 1964**

Length: 310' 6 3/4" oa; 299' 11"bp

Navigation Draft: 13'1" max

Beam: 41' max

Displacement: 2,528.72 fl

Main Engines: Fairbanks-Morse, direct reversing diesels

SHP: 6,000

Performance, Maximum Sustained: 17.4 kts, 10,138-nautical mile range  
Performance, Economic: 12.4 kts, 20,000-nautical mile range

Complement: 10 officers, 3 warrants, 138 men

Electronics: Radar: SPS-23, SPS-29B  
Sonar: SQS-1

Armament: 1 x 5"/38; 1 x Mk 10-1 A/S projector;

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### **Class History:**

The *Casco* class ships were built as small seaplane tenders by the US Navy. They were designed to operate out of small harbors and atolls and had a shallow draft. The fact that the class was very seaworthy, had good habitability, and long range made them well suited to ocean-station duty. In fact, an assessment made by the Coast Guard on the suitability of these vessels for Coast Guard service noted:

"The workmanship on the vessel is generally quite superior to that observed on other vessels constructed during the war. The vessel has ample space for stores, living accommodations, ships, offices and recreational facilities. The main engine system is excellent. . . .The performance of the vessel in moderate to heavy seas is definitely superior to that of any other cutter. This vessel can be operated at higher speed without storm damage than other Coast Guard vessels." [Memo, CDR W. C. Hogan, Commanding Officer, CGC MC CULLOCH to Commandant "SUBJ; CGC MC CULLOCH, Sutiability [sic] for use as CG Cutter.", 12 February 1947; copy in 311-Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.]

Once they were accepted into Coast Guard service, a number of changes were made in these ships to prepare them for ocean-station duty. A balloon shelter was added aft; there were spaces devoted to oceanographic equipment and a hydrographic winch as well as an oceanographic winch were added.

See *DANFS* for naval service.

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### **Cutter History:**

The *Casco* was homeported in Boston, MA for the duration of her life in the Coast Guard. The cutter partook in ocean station, law enforcement, and search and rescue operations in the Atlantic Ocean.

On 22 August 1949, the *Casco* rescued the crew of F/V *Magellan* and saved the sinking vessel. On 23 January 1950, *Casco* towed the disabled F/V *Wamsutta* from 86 miles north of Nantucket

to Boston. On 26 August 1950, *Casco* personnel medevaced a crewman from the Greek M/V *Igor* 360 miles northeast of Bermuda. On 24 November 1954, *Casco* towed the disabled F/V *Sea Ranger*.

On 17 February 1956, the ship's crew rescued 21 from a disabled USN seaplane that had ditched 100 miles south of Bermuda, and towed the plane to St. George's Harbor, Bermuda. On 20 October 1958, a crewman from M/V *Maye Lykes* was medevaced. From 1 August to 19 August 1963, the *Casco* conducted oceanographic experiments between South America and Africa in cooperation with eastern universities and international agencies. The *Casco* helped fight the fire on Long Wharf, Boston, on 27 March 1968.

After her decommissioning and return to the Navy in 1969, she was struck from the Naval Register and expended as target.

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### Photographs:



*Casco*, circa 1952, no caption.



*Casco*, circa 1969. Coast Guard photo 1CGD-01-23-69 (01); original caption reads: "Escorted by a plane, the 311-foot U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *CASCO* departs her homeport at Boston, Mass., to make her last ocean station weather patrol in the North Atlantic."

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**Sources:**

*Casco*, Cutter Subject File, USCG Historian's Office

*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol. II (1963), pp. 45-46.

"Listings: AVP's"; compiled and written by LCDR J. P. Smith, USCGR, copy in 311' Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.

Memo, CDR W. C. Hogan, Commanding Officer, CGC MC CULLOCH to Commandant "SUBJ; CGC MC CULLOCH, Sutiability [sic] for use as CG Cutter.", 12 February 1947; copy in 311-Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.

Robert Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft, 1946-1990* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990), pp. 10-16.

*Ship's Characteristics Card: USCGC Casco*, 7 October 1964.

