

Vought UO-1; UO-4



Historical Information:

The Coast Guard recognized that aircraft would make a useful adjunct to the service's efforts to enforce Prohibition. The Commandant, with the encouragement and support of aviation-minded officers, began to increase the size of the air fleet. In 1925 the Coast Guard borrowed a surplus Vought UO-1 from the U.S. Navy. A surplus tent was purchased from the U.S. Army for \$1.00 and \$100.00 was allocated by Coast Guard Headquarters for a ramp/runway and an airstation was established at Ten Pound Island, Gloucester Harbor, Massachusetts by Section Base #7. The airstation was placed under the command of C.C. Von Paulsen.

Coast Guard aviators first flew the Vought on 10 May 1925. The first use of an aircraft to chase a "rum-runner" was on 20 June 1925. The UO-1 assisted in the first capture of "rummie" with aviation support on 24 June 1925. The UO-1 was returned to the Navy on 27 October 1926.

According to Percy: "During 1926, Two modified Vought UO-1 seaplanes were built for the Coast Guard and were given the designation UO-4. These were seaplanes using the new 220hp Wright J-5C Whirlwind engine and were fitted with the improved UO-3/FU-1 wings. Delivered in December 1926, they were given the Coast Guard numbers 4 and 5, later changed to 404 and 405. Vought UO-4 404 was still in service during 1935. They later became registered V104 [404] and V105 [505]." [p. 321] These two Voughts, along with three Loening

OL-5's, were the first aircraft purchased by the Coast Guard and these purchases mark the true beginning of Coast Guard aviation.



Coast Guard UO-4, taken at Coast Guard Air Station Salem, Massachusetts, no date. On cradle.



Coast Guard UO-4 #CG-5, no date, on cradle, with Richard Burke.

Sources:

Arthur Percy, *U.S. Coast Guard Aircraft Since 1916* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1991), pp. 320-321.

Gordon Swanborough & Peter M. Bowers. *United States Navy Aircraft Since 1911* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990) (revised), pp. 432-435.

