

Project Profile – US Tethered Aerostat Radar System

Client: US Customs and Border Protection
General Contractors: Lockheed Martin and Peraton
Project Description: Process Video Systems
Project Timeline: 2001 - Ongoing

Eyes in the sky stretch over the southern U.S. border at 10,000 feet, from Yuma, Arizona, to Lajas, Puerto Rico. Eight special blimps that are part of the Tethered Aerostat Radar System, or TARS, watch over the southern U.S. border. Each balloon is moored to the ground with a special nylon fiber cable and raised and lowered with a powered winch. Swaying silently in the breeze, U.S. Customs and Border Protection aerostats are unmanned, unarmed, and spend their service lives hovering over a fixed location on the southern edge of the border.



AES Systems designed, built, and installed video cameras used to secure, operate, and track the Aerostats. AES personnel worked with National Guard units to complete the initial installations at each site. AES has supported the program with tech support and upgrades for the last 20 years.



Systems included the following:

- Industrial PTZ cameras around facilities
- Telemetry camera for monitoring aerostats
- Fiber optic infrastructure
- Wireless radios
- Recording and Control system