



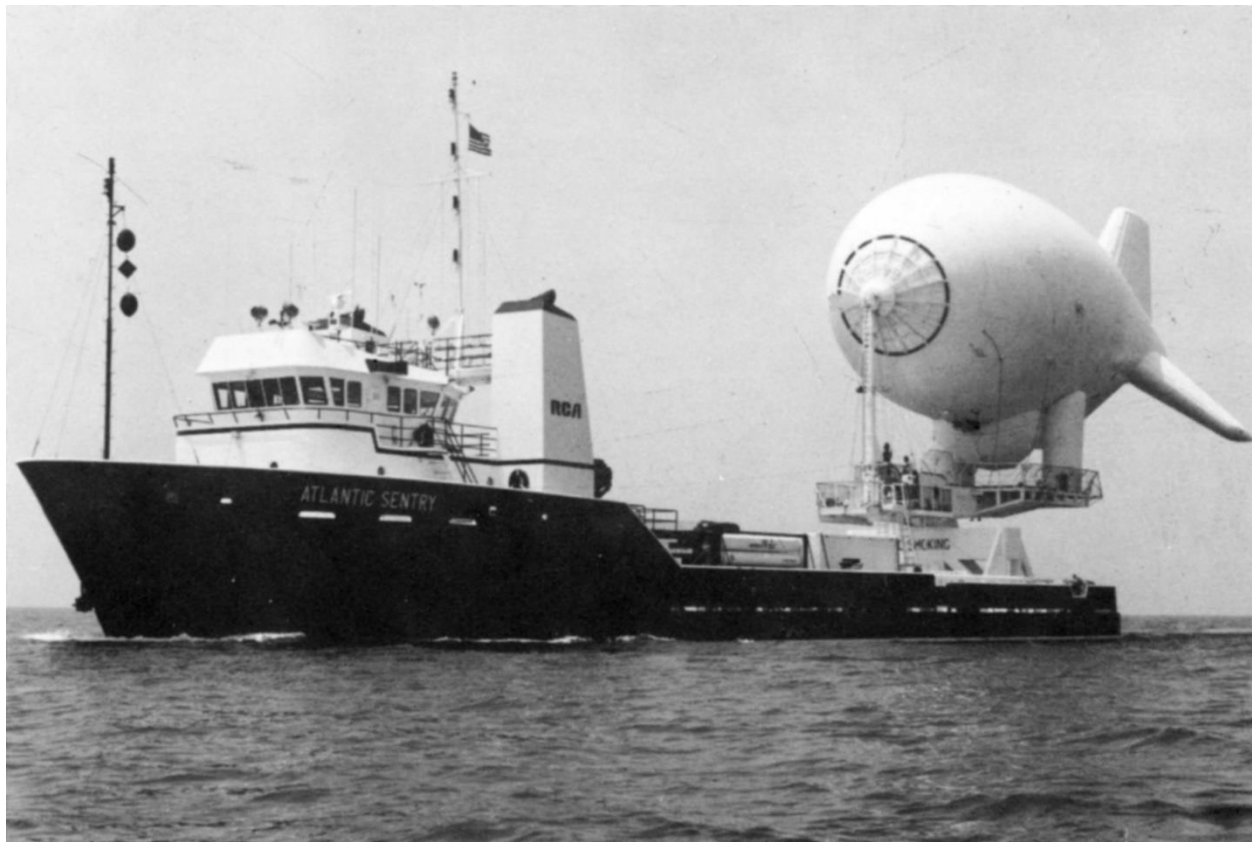
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## Aerostat Program

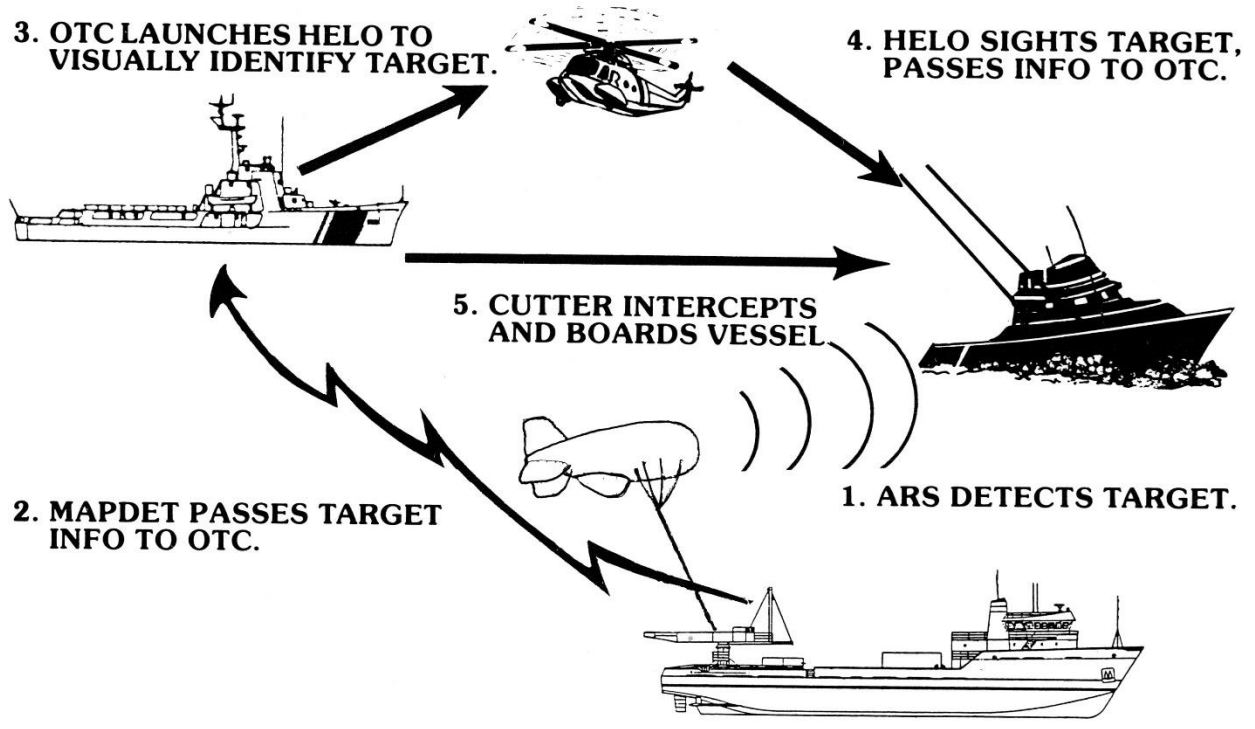
During the 1980s because of the increased illegal traffic of narcotics and migrants in the Caribbean, the Coast Guard established the Mobile Aerostat Program. It consisted of two shore-based units located in Key West and Miami, Florida. The units were comprised of two teams per vessel (total of five) which alternately deployed aboard Sea Based Aerostat (SBA) Platforms. Aerostats were unmanned lighter-than-air aircraft which mounted sophisticated radar and other surveillance equipment. The MAP mission was to provide continuous air and surface surveillance for other law enforcement units working in the same geographic area of responsibility. SBAs normally worked in conjunction with high and medium endurance cutters and patrol boat class vessels. Successful operations were conducted with other U. S. and foreign naval forces. From 1984 to the program's decommissioning on 31 March 1992, the Aerostats provided target information resulting in numerous drug seizures and illegal alien interdictions.





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