



CASE STUDY: RAID

TCOM PROVIDES TETHERED AEROSTAT PERSISTENT SURVEILLANCE SOLUTIONS TO RAID PROGRAM IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN



THE CHALLENGE

Under the darkness of night in Iraq and out of range of ground-based sentries, enemy fighters were able to creep in undetected toward forward operating bases (FOB) and posts where U.S. forces were deployed. Intent on launching mortar attacks or implanting explosive devices designed to disrupt operations and kill U.S. soldiers, they posed a deadly and pervasive threat. The U.S. military needed a reliable surveillance system that could foresee impending danger and give military commanders the actionable intelligence needed to prevent and intercept attacks.

QUICK FACTS:

- ▶ U.S. Forces in Iraq lacked effective perimeter surveillance for forward operating bases
- ▶ Troops at high risk of enemy attack
- ▶ U.S. Military deployed RAID program
- ▶ TCOM 17M tethered aerostats deployed in bases throughout Iraq
- ▶ Larger TCOM Aerostat systems deployed in Afghanistan to relay surveillance and communications information rapidly and reliably
- ▶ TCOM aerostat persistent surveillance systems save lives

THE SOLUTION

To counter this threat, the U.S. military turned to trusted partner TCOM to provide tethered aerostat systems that delivered persistent surveillance and communications needed to detect and neutralize the attackers before they could carry out their missions. The first use of tethered aerostats in this application came under the innovative RAID (Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment) program. RAID made use of the TCOM 17M aerostat to carry electro/optical and infrared payloads to gather intelligence around the clock and communications payloads to provide accurate surveillance information in real time.

RAID utilized EO/IR sensors, radar and flash and acoustic gunshot detectors to provide persistent, panoramic surveillance of the covered areas, providing timely warning of potential threats and other valued intelligence. Combined with the surveillance towers (G-BOSS), the aerostat systems provided essential situational awareness necessary for improved security and daily operations in and around the FOB.

THE RESULT

The RAID program was so successful that many more 17M tethered aerostats were soon pressed into action across forward operating bases throughout Iraq. Since its initial deployment in 2003, over 60 aerostat systems and more than 300 RAID systems have been deployed as part of the Persistent Surveillance and Dissemination Systems (PSDS2) currently in use in Iraq and Afghanistan. This program has been credited with saving many lives and has also led to the development of the TCOM 22M and 28M tethered aerostat systems for use in Iraq and Afghanistan where challenging operational environments required larger platforms. Most importantly, RAID established the value of the tethered aerostats to support U.S. Military on the battlefield and has led to the unprecedented use of aerostats to support and enhance U.S. military operations worldwide.