

CASE STUDY: ITALY

TCOM PERSISTENT SEA SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM IMPROVES MARITIME SECURITY IN ITALY



THE CHALLENGE

During the Bosnian Conflict, Italian Security Forces were faced with the problem of stopping the flow of illegal immigrants and contraband that was frequently being smuggled from the Balkans, across the Otranto Strait, then inland from the Italian coast. Smugglers used compact, quick moving small boats and rafts. The use of Italian Navy ships to patrol the straits and detect and apprehend these smugglers was far too costly and inefficient.

THE SOLUTION

Italy turned to TCOM, a global leader in aerostat-borne surveillance solutions, to deliver an affordable, persistent sea surveillance system that would provide comprehensive monitoring of the Otranto Strait and Italian coastline. The system, identified as SAACS (South Adriatic Aerostat Coastal Surveillance System), used a TCOM medium-sized aerostat configured with a multi-mode search radar, a stabilized day/night camera suite and a V/UHF transceiver. The radar provided the early long-range detection and tracking of the small targets and cued the camera to provide timely actionable intelligence which was transmitted to remotely-located Navy command and control centers, and to Navy Patrol Ships nearby.

THE RESULT

TCOM's SAACS provided total domain awareness, which enabled Italian Government law enforcement officials to be waiting on shore to apprehend the immigrants as they waded in from the small vessels. The aerostat-borne persistent sea surveillance system also provided the Italian Navy with the information that allowed them to efficiently apprehend the smugglers on their return trip to the Balkans. This challenging mission was accomplished for a fraction of the cost of naval operations, or manned airborne surveillance. TCOM's affordable persistent sea surveillance system became a critical component to Italian maritime defense. Today, TCOM mid-size aerostat systems continue to provide affordable round-the-clock coastal protection in trouble spots worldwide.

QUICK FACTS:

- ▶ Italian Officials faced challenge from smugglers and illegal immigrants during Bosnian conflict
- ▶ Small, fast-moving vessels difficult to detect by conventional methods
- ▶ Navy cutter patrols were extremely costly and inefficient
- ▶ TCOM SAACS persistent aerostat surveillance system provided total domain awareness
- ▶ Italian officials were able to monitor, track and intercept smugglers
- ▶ Italian law enforcement effectively curtailed incidences of illegal immigration
- ▶ Authorities obtained the actionable intelligence needed to ensure coastal security