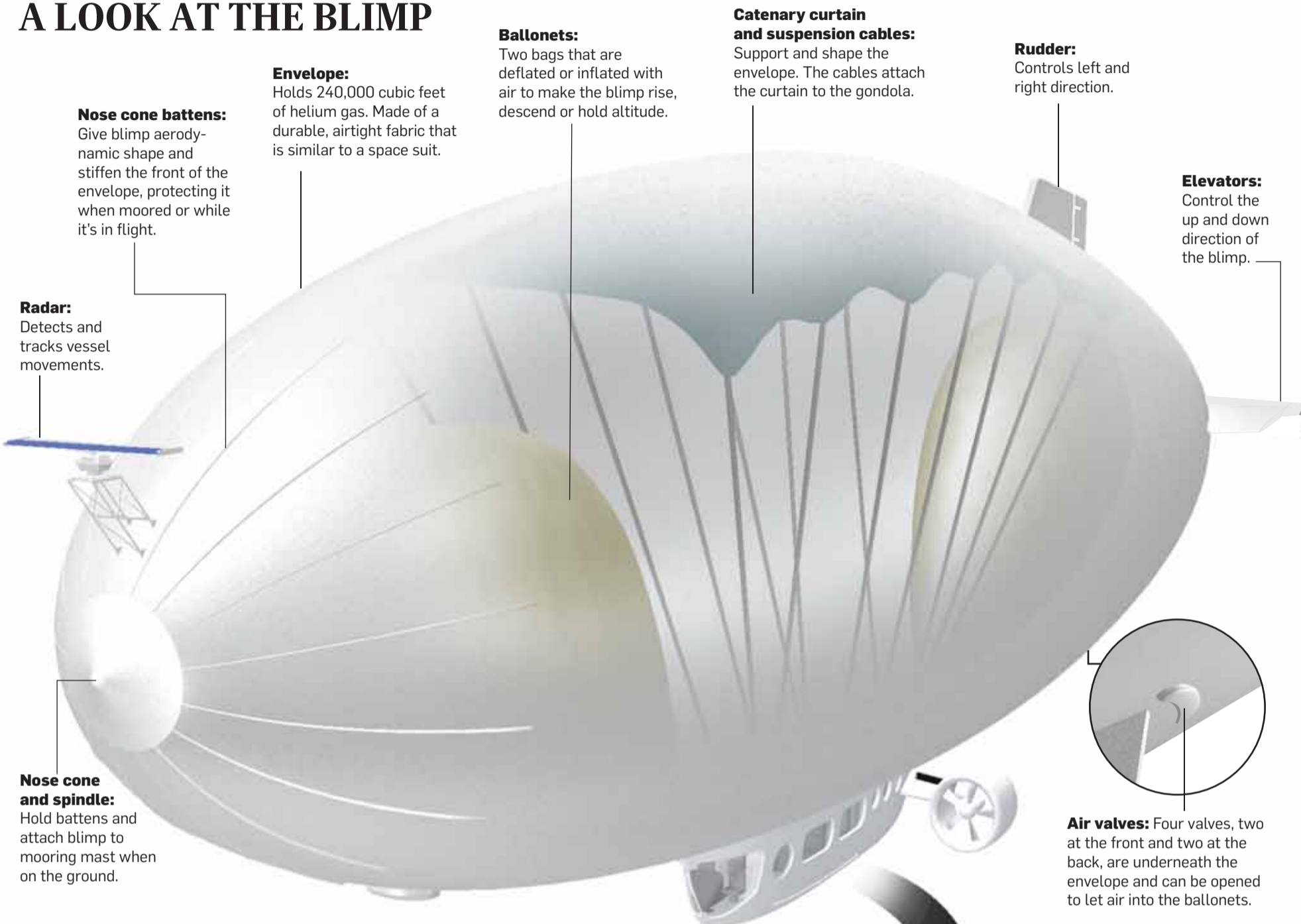


# Blimp patrol

The Navy and Coast Guard recently finished a six-week surveillance test of a Skyship 600 blimp off Florida's southern coast. It was leased by the U.S. government for \$1.6 million and one day may be used to spot drug smugglers and illegal immigrants heading to the United States.

## A LOOK AT THE BLIMP



## WATCHING THE FLORIDA STRAITS

The blimp flew patrols for up to 8 hours.

### Mission period:

July 4-Aug. 29

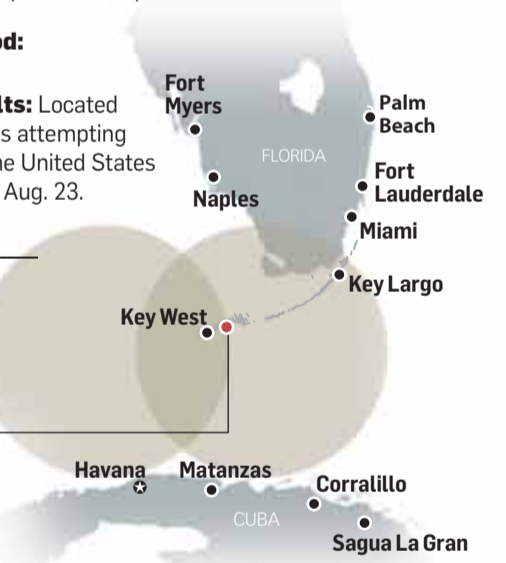
### Mission results:

Located Cuban migrants attempting to make it to the United States on July 13 and Aug. 23.

### Surveillance areas

### BOCA CHICA NAVAL AIR STATION:

Navy and Coast Guard base

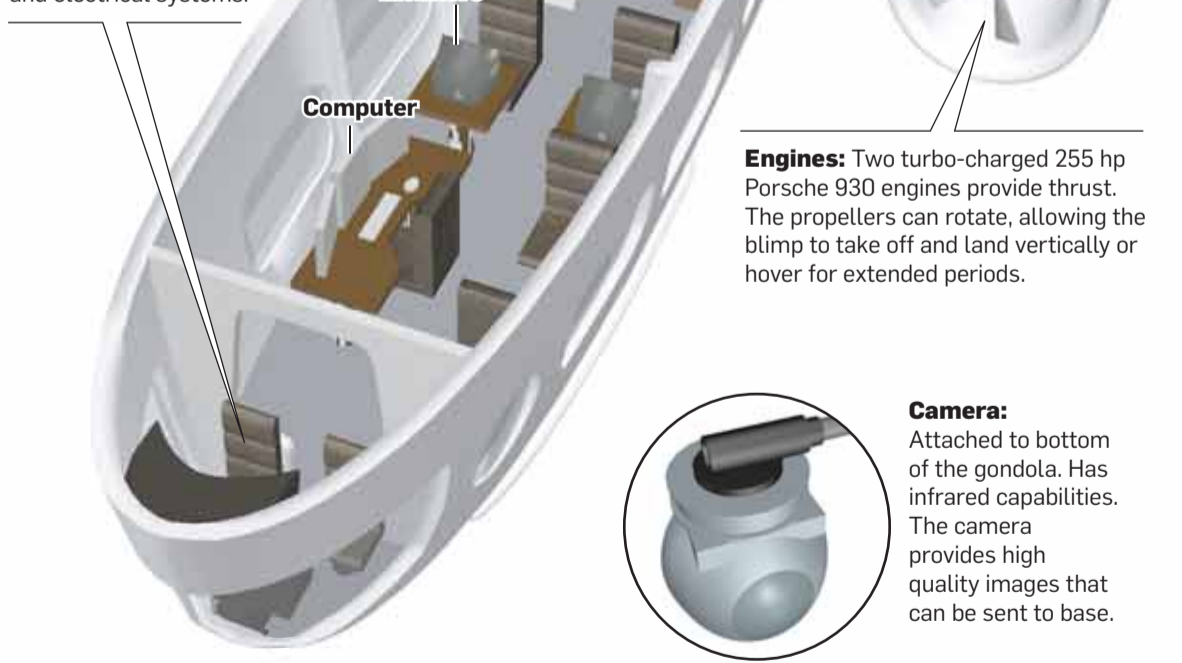


## THE GONDOLA

Large interior carries mission equipment and provides a solid platform, free of vibration.

### Flight deck:

A standard flight panel manages fuel and electrical systems.



## SPECIFICATIONS

### Dimensions and size comparison

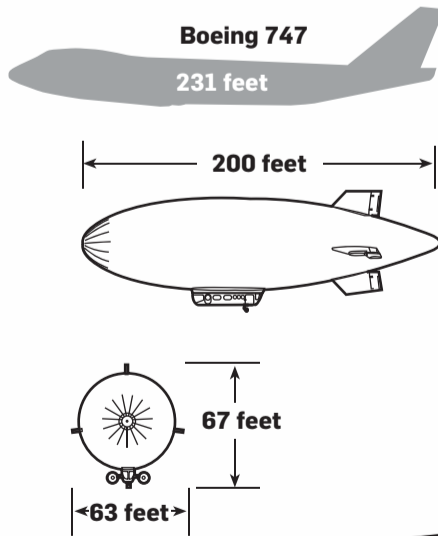
**Owner and operator:**  
Airship Management Services, Inc.

**Cruising altitude:**  
1,500 feet to 3,000 feet

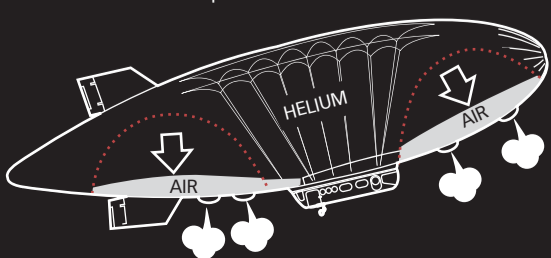
**Travel speed:**  
57 mph

**Endurance:**  
Can stay aloft up to 52 hours without refueling.

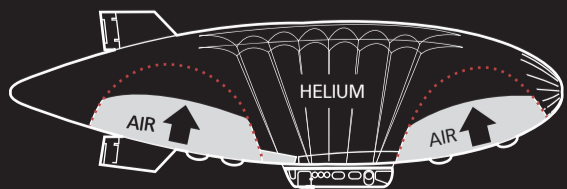
**Total personnel:**  
20, consisting of two pilots, three engineers and 15 ground crew.



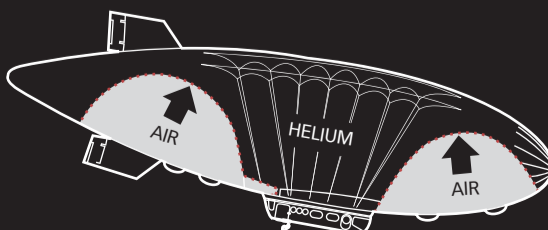
**1.** To ascend, pilot vents air from the ballonets through the valves. Helium makes the blimp lighter than air so the blimp rises.



**2.** Once the blimp reaches the preferred altitude, pilots pump air into the ballonets to balance helium, which levels the blimp.



**3.** To descend, air is added to the ballonets, making the blimp heavier and causing it to lose altitude.



## HOW TO FLY A BLIMP

The blimp carries a large volume of helium gas, which is lighter than air. "Heavy" air is used to control the up and down movement. How it works: