

# Garmin 695 GPS

Garmin have just released their new portable 695 GPS on the market. It boasts a 7 inch screen and a marvellous array of easy to use features. KiwiFlyer took one flying, courtesy of South Pacific Avionics.

## Impressions and Ease of Use

With the intention being to try it out rather than simply rewrite the sales brochure, the first thing to question was just how long it would take to learn to drive the unit. The answer was about two hours one evening on the sofa, in which time we had pretty well mastered all the common functions, set up some basic flight plans, run a simulation, and become quite comfortable with the software navigation systems. It is certainly an elegant product.

The 695 is very intuitive to use, especially for Garmin veterans and such users will probably find themselves ignoring the manual for all but reference questions when they can't figure something out by trial and discovery. On that subject, the manual is good rather than great. The index isn't as comprehensive as it might be and we couldn't find any written reference to the Simulator functions which we located the menu for only after an internet search.

A small niggle is that you'll have to find your own carry case because one isn't supplied, though in fairness, a clip on protective screen cover is.

Something that does impress is the display refresh speed. Interruptions to scrolling last for fractions of a second only and shouldn't annoy anyone in the same way that delays on some other units do.

## The Hardware

The 7" screen really is daylight viewable in bright sunshine, with display backlight intensity being adjustable over 10 steps. Also impressive is the fully concealed built-in aerial which was good enough to pick up 5 satellites sitting inside the house, albeit beside a couple of corner windows. A remote aerial is also supplied, as is a yoke mounting bracket.

For control, the 695 offers buttons for zoom, flight plan, nearest and direct-to functions. There are five 'soft keys' for selecting various options within each display mode. The best part though, is a robust rotating joystick that facilitates fast selection of menu items and the entering of waypoints and other information.

The 695 weighs in at 1kg including the integrated NiMH battery which will last up to 3 hours with full backlight.

## Features and Connectivity

The 695 offers all the typical aviation GPS features for location, route planning and tracking. Its accomplishment here is the ease with which all of this can be navigated. The rotary joystick can be used to toggle Map, Waypoint, Terrain and Info displays and the soft keys to select VFR, IFR, Topographical or Satellite views. The terrain display and safe altitude functions



The 695 is robust and elegant. Controls include short cut and soft keys plus a rotary joystick.

are particularly reassuring to confirm expectations at night or in low visibility.

The 'Nearest' button opens a screen from which the rotary joystick will toggle between the nearest airports, VORs, NDBs, airspace, intersections, waypoints, cities, and ATC. A 'smart airspace' function can also be used to highlight airspace that is near to the present position and altitude.

Displays are all user configurable to almost any requirement and a de-clutter function offers single button staged removal of roads, airspace, and other details except for the route being followed.

Other functions include a weight and balance page to help with CG calculations for multiple aircraft and a flight log which will store information from up to 50 flights.

Trip and Waypoint Manager software allows for transfer of waypoints and routes to and from a PC via USB cable. GPS data can also be archived for future use.

A very nice feature is a capability to connect to a Garmin radio whereby frequencies from information pages can be pushed straight to the radio from the GPS. Connections will soon be available for Zaon PCAS traffic information display.

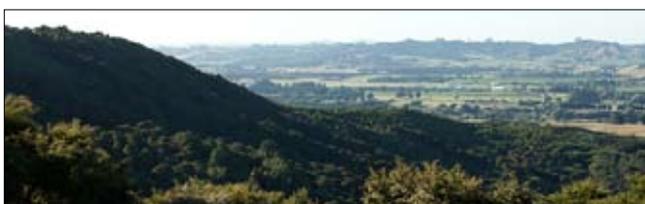
## In summary

We had a great time flying with the 695. It packs an enormous capability into a genuinely portable package that is very easy to operate. It is a must see product if you're in the market for a new portable GPS.



At left: The nearest airspace as we depart Ardmore and at centre, the Hamilton Airport arrival page.

At right: The view from a helicopter after lifting from a remote pad near Ardmore, matched by the terrain image shown in red and yellow above. A white arrow on the lower 'profile' view shows aircraft altitude being just below the hill height. Red shows ground within 100'.



**Available from South Pacific Avionics**

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