

Jared Kellerer | 2024 March 23

Purpose: describe the fundamental use of the Garmin inReach device for Paragliding Pilots

Core Functions

The Garmin inReach is, at the most basic level, a satellite communication device which facilitates:

1. Tracking
 2. Communication
 3. S.O.S.
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Subscriptions

- Don't overthink it - Safety does everything you need
 - Safety: unlimited SOS, 10 free texts (\$0.50 each after), unlimited presets, 10 minute minimum tracking intervals \$0.10 each || *This is what I have*
 - Recreation: same but more free texts || *I see no reason to pay for this*
 - Expedition: same but unlimited everything and 2 minute tracking intervals || *This has the advantage of 2 mile tracking which can make a real difference*
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Device Information

- inReach Address
 - Format: jkellerer18@inreach.garmin.com
 - This is how a message is delivered to the device
 - *Like* an email address but **not** an email address (cannot deliver to inReach address from email account)
 - Find by visiting <https://explore.garmin.com/> -> Account page
- Mapshare Address
 - Format: <https://share.garmin.com/JaredKellerer>
 - Your own personal website - share this with people who will have access to the internet
 - Displays tracking and allows user to message, locate, and share a location with you

- Find by visiting <https://explore.garmin.com/> -> Social page
- You should know these or save them to a note in your phone - make it easy to trade info quickly and without cell service

Tracking

- Purpose
 - A bunch of the most capable people you know having access to your location, along with loved ones
 - FOMO, unfortunately
 - Retrieves!
- All tracking comes from MapShare - giving someone at home your MapShare is the most robust way to share your location (tell them to put it in your contact notes)

3rd Party Sites

- These sites pull MapShare data from users and display them in groups on a public site
- <https://xcfind.paraglide.us/>
 - Group Maps - this is what most people use XCFind for and is very useful
 - Pilot list contains MapShare links - you can send a message to someone if you don't already have contact info - very helpful to a pilot that doesn't have the necessary contacts saved

Tracking Groups

Map **SIVclinic.com 2024** (11 pilots, most recent message from Brian Duffy at 2024-03-08 16:06:00)
 Map **NW USA** (241 pilots, most recent message from Brian Jackson at 2024-03-23 11:33:00)

Pilot	Links	Newest Msg	Type
Brian Jackson	inReach TXT	2024-03-23 11:33:00	trk
Troy Bainbridge	inReach TXT	2024-03-23 00:01:00	trk
Alex Colby	inReach TXT	2024-03-22 13:58:00	Cust
Josh Krohn	inReach TXT	2024-03-22 12:53:30	trk
Austin	inReach TXT	2024-03-22 10:33:45	trk

Click + to expand

Link to MapShare

- Thank you David Wheeler - please make your donation
- <https://www.xctrack.me/>
 - Allows you to create small groups immediately
 - Consider using on trips and saving a shortcut to your phone's home page

Communication

Methods

- inReach <-> cell
- inReach <-> email
 - NOTE - direct email replies do not work, must use the reply link in the email body
 - Someone cannot send an email to your inReach address directly
- inReach <-> inReach
- Mapshare can be used to send messages and see location - share this with folks who you want to keep an eye on you

Keys to Successfully Communicating via inReach

- [Garmin Documentation](#)
- **Contacts:** you MUST make sure that you have the phone, email, and inReach address of anyone you wish to contact saved in your Garmin Explore contacts and synced with the device *before you need it*
- **Start a chat:** If you intend to have ongoing communication with a phone/email/inReach, send them a message from your device so they can reply without digging for your info
- IF you are trying to send a message FROM your inReach device
 - Always message both their phone and email address
 - Message their inReach depending on the situation
 - If they might be expecting to hear from you, message their inReach in case they are out of service
- IF you are trying to send a message TO an inReach device, you can:
 - Use the MapShare message function OR
 - Reply to an existing SMS thread OR
 - Use the reply link to a message you have received from the device
 - Keep your inReach on and with a view of the sky in case they message your device

Presets

- Unlimited Preset message sending
- Officially discontinued and replaced by Check-In Messages ([further reading](#)), however there has been success with emailing Garmin and requesting Preset messages with an explanation of need
- Required for most competitions (so email Garmin if you plan to do comps)
- Recommended Presets

- LOK + phone number (LOK = Landed OK)
- Needs Assistance + phone number
- Delayed but OK + phone number
- I recommend sending "LOK" whenever appropriate
- Recipients
 - Sending to your MapShare highly recommended
 - Consider if you want them to go to flying buddies, loved ones, etc.

Pre-Flight Best Practice

- Make sure you have the phone, email, and inReach addresses of
 - Everyone not on the hill that you may want to message
 - Everyone you are flying with
 - Make sure you have shared your inReach and MapShare addresses with the same people
 - Start any conversation threads that may be useful
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S.O.S.

Pushing the Button

[Garmin Documentation](#)

- Don't rely on SOS when making decisions about where to put yourself, but use it when needed
- When SOS is hit, Garmin:
 - **Dispatches the appropriate local authority**
 - Reaches out to your emergency contacts
- Garmin claim that you can use your device to activate an SOS on behalf of another party without being responsible for their fees

Preparation

- Fill out emergency contacts
 - <https://explore.garmin.com/> -> Account page
 - Consider having your #1 contact as someone well-equipped to deal with a PG related scenario, rather than your mother
 - #2 can be your mother

- Fill out personal emergency notes with relevant medical information
 - Other insurance policies (e.g. Global Rescue) and their contact info can be listed here; but Garmin may not contact them
 - Have the relevant form of SAR insurance to cover local costs
 - Garmin offers a high risk SAR plan that explicitly covers paragliding
 - Local options such as Airlift Northwest, LifeFlight, state SAR cards, etc. can all help to cover expenses
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Best Practices

- **Put your inReach & Mapshare address in your Telegram & WhatsApp bios**
- Do not make yourself completely dependent on 3rd party solutions and/or cell service
- Share your information and get others' information
- Include your lat/long, location link, and name as a signature in your SMS settings

SMS Message Configuration

When you send a message from your inReach to an SMS (phone) number, the following can be included with each message:

- Include my latitude and longitude as text in the message.
- Include a link to an online map with the location of my message (not a MapShare map link).
- Include my name as a signature (otherwise, your name is not shown to the recipient).

- MapShare settings

MapShare Settings

Name (Optional)
Jared Kellerer

Description (Optional)
Description

The name and description are visible when friends and family visit your MapShare page.
TIP: Update these to reflect your current trip.

Password (Optional But Recommended) **Do NOT recommend**
Password

Setting a password allows only viewers you know to see your MapShare page.
TIP: Changing passwords lets you have different viewers on different trips. Clear the password field to remove password protection.

- Allow map viewers to send you messages.
These messages will use your monthly allotment.
- Allow map viewers to locate you.
Viewers can request your location, even if you aren't otherwise sharing your location.
- Show waypoints created in the field on MapShare.
Waypoints created on a device will be sent to MapShare.

Cancel Save Changes

- Managing information/data

- Purpose: easy access to your inReach information and that of others
- Your Explore contacts can save all of key contact info, except for MapShare
- I recommend a note on your phone that is saved offline with your info and any MapShare addresses you may want to know (e.g. iPhone notes, Google doc, etc.)

- Tracking

- My recommendation is to always turn on your inReach tracking, even for sledders
- You never know when something is going to happen, and having your location pinging in the event of an incident may make all the difference if you are unable to reach out for help
- Thought experiment: you open XCFind and see someone's location has been pinging on the side of Blanchard for 3 hours at 0' AGL - what do you think is going on and what would you do?

Practice

- Trade contact information and fully complete your Garmin Explore contacts (inReach, SMS, email)

- Send and reply by SMS
- Send and reply by email
- Message between 2 inReach
- Send to an inReach from MapShare