

AVSIM Commercial FSX Aircraft Review

Tecnam Sierra LSA



Product Information

Publishers: [Ant's Airplanes](#)

Description: GA aircraft add-on.

Download Size:
50 MB

Format:
Download

Simulation Type:
FSX

Reviewed by: [Aidan Sandri](#) AVSIM Staff Reviewer - December 18, 2010

Introduction

The Tecnam Sierra LSA has a two seat configuration, low wings and is a light aircraft powered by a Rotax 912 ULS engine with maximum power of up to 5800 rpm. It has a cruise speed of 119 knots (5250 rpm) and climbs at 1200 ft/min. Though it is not an aerobatic aircraft, it has crisp control response and excellent take off, climb and turn performance. The Sierra LSA has a range of over 600nm.

This is Ant's Airplanes first payware release, and his second aircraft ever made. Included into the Sierra LSA is:

- Native FSX model with bump and specular maps
- Highly detailed Virtual Cockpit with full animations and mouse control
- Virtual Cockpit rain effects (with exterior rain effects on canopy)
- Silky smooth 3D gauges
- Custom radios package
- Animation Manager controls display of pilot, passenger, joystick, wheel covers, tiedowns, pitot covers.
- Special model that provides compatibility with the Reality XP 530 or 430 GPS.

- Tested by genuine Sierra pilots
- High quality realistic sounds
- Paintkit available on request.

I also emailed Anthony Lynch, the maker of the Sierra LSA. Here is the interview I had with him:

1- This is your first payware release, what inspired the change from scenery to aircrafts??

I like to do new things. In each scenery release I would try something new and different but it got to the point where I thought I would like to try to make an aircraft. That's something new.

2- Why the Sierra LSA? Why not another GA plane?

A gentleman from New Zealand emailed me about Boonah airport scenery I had made. I had made some static aircraft models of the Tecnam Echo and P92 at Boonah and as he was a real world Echo pilot he wondered if I knew of any aircraft like that for FSX. When I came around to starting the Sierra it turns out that the NZ guy didn't have the Echo any more but his friend had a Sierra. Personally I thought the Sierra was a better looking aircraft than the Echo so that is why I made the Sierra.

3- What do you like about it the most?

3D gauges. I love 3D gauges.

4- Many developers fail to add the virtual cockpit rain effect into this product, though you have done this, was it hard to overcome with the FSX engine limitations?

It's not at all hard to add rain effects. The theory is very simple. I even added them to the exterior model as well as the interior model. What it does require is a bit of hard work though to make the raindrop textures.

5- What's in the future, another great release? ;)

In the near future is a freeware airport called Watt's Bridge near Brisbane, Australia. After that I'll finish the Dirfter Ultralight aircraft.

Thank you for your interest in the aircraft.
Anthony Lynch

Installation and Documentation

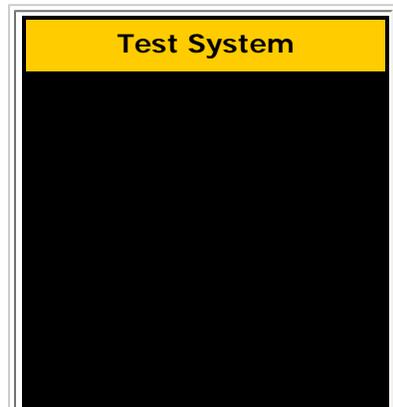
You have three places you can purchase this aircraft, [The FlightSim Store](#), [FSPilotShop](#) or [SimMarket](#). Once you have purchased this add-on, download the 50MB file from your account. Once downloaded, open it up and run the installer. Follow the required steps and make sure to have your registration details ready from where you purchased the aircraft. It will then install into your main Flight Simulator X Directory. A very easy installation process.

Included with the downloaded file is a 40 page manual (a 36 page manual and 3 page PDF file), one is a detailed guide on how to get the aircraft started and what every function in the cockpit does, and the 3 page document is for those who want to get in the air quickly with basic knowledge. Both manuals will give the simmer an excellent understanding on how to operate the aircraft.

A positive thing I liked out of the manual will be for those who use the RealityXP 530 or 430 GPS models. The manual describes on how to add them to the special versions of the aircraft, which I believe simmers will have no trouble understanding on how to do this. I do not have any RealityXP add-ons, but from reading it, it seems like it will be a very easy process.

The aircraft was created on the following system, which is what the aircraft was aimed to run on:

- Intel E8500 @ 3.16Ghz
- 4Gb Ram
- Nvidia 9600GT 1Gb
- Windows XP



If you are not sure if the aircraft will run as you may think, there is a demo version on the Ant's Airplanes website to test out (though it is very limited!)

Exterior Model

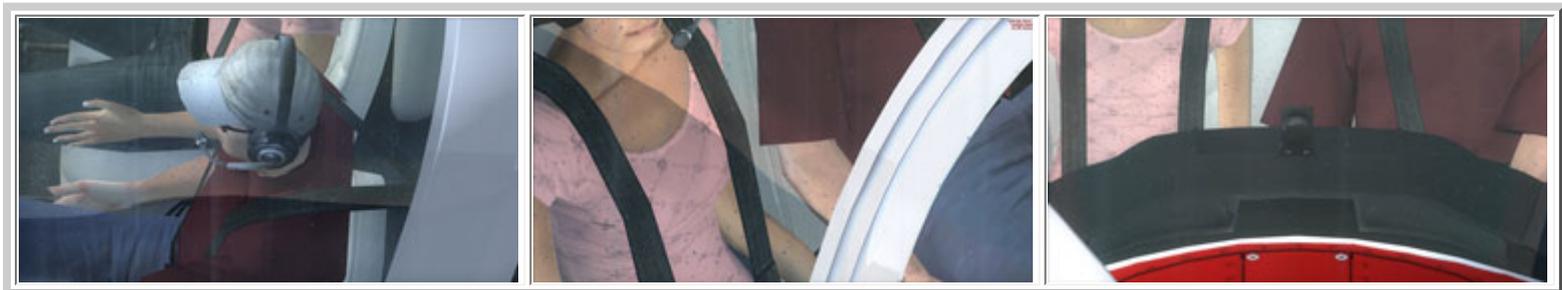
The exterior model for the Sierra LSA is fantastic and represents what the real aircraft looks like. Everything is detailed down into the very last rivet, which from what I can tell, was a bit blurry close up, but if you were looking at the aircraft in the Locked Spot and the normal 0.90 it would be hard for you to notice the rivets were blurry.

There is a control panel which can be loaded within FSX which allows you to choose whether you wish to have the nose wheel fairings, wheel covers and other choices like the wheel chocks, tie down ropes and the pitot tube covers once the aircraft is completely shut down.

All the flaps, elevators, rudders and canopy work as they should in real life (ie, moving).



One of my favorite features included on the exterior model of the aircraft is when it is raining; you can see the raindrops on the top of the wings and windows of the canopy. Of all the aircraft I have, and the list is long, this is the first time I have noticed this extreme detail. The best part is they don't just sit there; they fade away after a few seconds and more drop back onto the aircraft.



Virtual Cockpit

As with the quality of the exterior model, the Virtual Cockpit is no let down in quality, if anything, it's better! When I asked Anthony a few questions, his favorite part of the aircraft was the 3D gauges, an exciting part of the aircraft. The 3D gauges are smooth and very good looking (they may even distract you from flying your aircraft they are that good looking!).

Intel i5 750 - 3.5Ghz
Nvidia 9800GT 1Gb
8Gb DDR3 Ram
Windows 7 64 Bit.
Logitech 3D Extreme
TrackIR 4.

Flying Time:
18 hours



Everything in the Virtual Cockpit is clickable or modeled in 3D; from the ELT to the circuit breakers. This is probably the most detail ever put into a cockpit on a general aviation plane that I have seen. I can say with pride that this is a complete 3D virtual cockpit with not one thing left unmodeled. The rain effect can also be seen while sitting inside the cockpit.

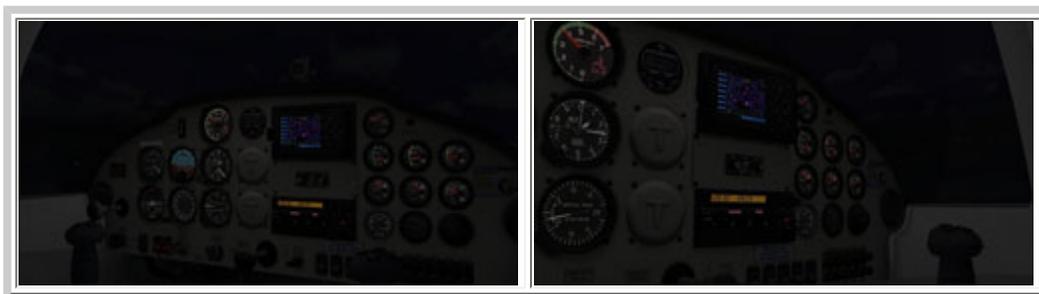


There are several 2D pop up panels included in the aircraft:

- Shift+2 = The default GPS (RXP version if you have it)
- Shift+3 = Animation Manger.

There is no 2D cockpit included with this add-on. The Animation Manager is very easy to use and configure, and adds features such as seeing the pilot and passenger in the virtual cockpit.

The night lighting included in the Virtual Cockpit is very well done, hence making it easy for the simmer to navigate their way around it without struggling to see what their instruments say. Each individual gauge, radio and the GPS have their own light which is very well done.



Sounds

The sounds included with this add-on are very realistic when listening to audio recordings of the different RPM levels,

the aircraft revs all the way to 5000rpm, which in fact roars very loudly, just like you would hear from the aircraft in real life. All the switches, the flap handle, starter switch, door and many more items make noise when you click or use them.

A lot of effort, from what I have heard, has gone into the sounds, something simmers will love to hear when taking off from that small grass strip (or hate, if they have a headache)

Complexity

How complex is this add-on? It isn't of A2A's complexity with their 'Accu-Sim' but it does offer the simmer enough complexity for such a simple aircraft to keep them busy. This aircraft does not model its own failures in FSX and I found it difficult to tell if your engine was on fire for the simple reasons that you cannot see smoke from inside the Virtual Cockpit; but the RPMs did die down and I noticed it would not go above 3000RPM until it got down to 1000RPM where the engine choked and shut down.

If you're a student at a flight school learning to fly a Sierra LSA, then this aircraft should have enough complexity to help you become a better pilot and to practice the proper procedures. For those who just want to jump in and have some fun, this aircraft offers that too.

Flying Dynamics

Although the Sierra LSA is not cleared to fly aerobatics, the flying dynamics represented in this aircraft allow you to do so by performing the odd barrel roll, or doing a very sharp turn. More importantly, if you want it to fly straight, it will fly straight and not bank to the side like some other add-on aircraft I own.

The rudder is nice and firm, allowing for you to 'slip it' on approach if you are high and fast. It is possible to set your throttle idle, push the rudder to the left and turn the plane to the right while maintaining a descent, staying straight and not increasing in speed until you level off again.

Compared to Carenado, where sometimes the flying dynamics can be a let down, Ant's Airplanes seem to pick up where they dropped the ball offering realistic flying dynamics that any simmer will enjoy.

Performance

Performance in the Sierra LSA is fantastic, over Friday Harbor using the Orbx PNW add-on and REX Overdrive, I can fly all over the place with my frames set to unlimited and they will stay above 40FPS at all times with no stutters or dips in FPS, this is with my autogen sliders set at 'normal'.

I could give you a list of what performance was like compared to other aircraft in different sceneries including international, regional or grass strip airports, but the Sierra LSA will easily win. FPS are the same or better than the default Cessna 172.

If you are worried about performance, run the demo version available of the Ant's Airplanes website.

Conclusion/Final Remarks

Will you like this aircraft? Yes, I say you will. This aircraft is perfect for a small flight, say a cross country flight across New Zealand or the Northern Rockies. The 3D Gauges are to die for, the sounds are to die for, the rain effects are to die for, but most importantly, the overall aircraft is to fantastic!

I have a lot of GA add-ons in my hangar and some I no longer fly these days but after having this add-on for nearly three months, I can say I will be flying this one for a while.

If you aren't happy with it, let's put it this way. Download the freeware Australian Airports from Anthony, and his Tiger Moth. If you're happy with them, consider that you got this aircraft for free and make a \$20 donation to him for all these add-ons he has made. And for \$20 bucks. What other add-ons with such high quality do you get for that price these days?

There is no reason why any simmer should not have this little baby in their hangar.

What I Like About Tecnam Sierra LSA

- Rain Drop effect.
- I know I'm a sucker for them.. 3D Gauges!
- Sounds are accurate.
- Performance.
- Price.

What I Don't Like About Tecnam Sierra LSA

- Not a thing .

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Comments?

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