

National avalanche bulletin no. 135

for Saturday, 22 March 2008

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High avalanche danger on northern Alpine Ridge, especially for backcountry skiers and freeriders

Current conditions

On Friday it was heavily overcast and in northern regions it snowed, at times intensively, down to low altitudes. Since early Friday morning the following amounts of new snow have accrued: north of the Rhone-Rhine line, in Lower Valais and in Goms, 30 to 50 cm; in northern Valais and in the Glarus region, up to 70 cm; in the remaining Upper Valais, the remaining Gotthard region and in northern Grisons, 10 to 30 cm, elsewhere less than 10 cm. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 6 degrees. Strong and gusty westerly winds prevailed, in Grisons and Ticino the winds were moderate to strong. In the major areas of precipitation, large sized snowdrift accumulations have formed widespread. The new snow and snowdrift are generally poorly bonded with the old snowpack and very prone to triggering.

Short-term development

On Friday night the precipitation will gradually slacken off. During the day on Saturday it will be predominantly overcast in northern regions and intermittent snowfall is expected. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, isolated bright spots are possible. In southern regions it will be partly sunny. By Saturday evening, an additional 15 to 30 cm of snow is expected. In the remaining Valais and in northern Grisons, 5 to 15 cm of snow is expected. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 8 degrees. Moderate to strong northerly winds will prevail in northern regions, in Ticino and in Grisons the winds will be light to moderate.

The new snow and snowdrift will remain prone to triggering in these low temperatures.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge not including Chablais; in addition, Goms:

High avalanche danger (Level 4)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Numerous medium sized, as well as isolated large sized natural avalanches can be expected. These can in isolated cases advance as far as low altitude valley areas and put exposed transportation routes at risk. For backcountry tours and freeriding, extensive experience in assessing avalanche dangers is imperative.

Remaining northern flank of the Alps; remaining Valais; remaining central Main Alpine Ridge; remaining parts of northern and central Grisons; Lower Engadine; Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects. In the indicated regions of the northern flank of the Alps, they are above approximately 1600 m. In the remaining regions of this danger level, they are above approximately 2000. Even single backcountry skiers and freeriders can trigger medium sized avalanches. Particularly in the indicated regions of the northern flank of the Alps and the Valais, isolated natural avalanches are also possible.

Ticino mountains south of the Main Alpine Ridge; southern Val Calanca and Misox; Upper Engadine; Bergell and Puschlav:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Fresh, generally small sized snowdrift accumulations can easily be triggered. Particularly in the Upper Engadine, isolated medium sized avalanches which even fracture down to the old snowpack can be triggered by large additional loading.

Trend for Easter Sunday and Easter Monday

In northern regions it will be variably cloudy on both days. Intermittent snowfall is expected. In southern regions it will be somewhat more pleasant and a bit of snowfall is expected on Sunday only. The avalanche danger will recede in northern regions in particular.

Additional information: 'Fax-on-demand' (CHF 1.49/min)

0900 59 2020 List of fax aids SLF
0900 59 2025 Snow Depths Map (in case of major change)
0900 59 2026 New Snow Map daily

Weather Information in collaboration with MeteoSwiss

0900 162 138 / 338 Alpine Weather Report MeteoSwiss phone/fax
(phone: CHF 1.20/min) (fax: CHF 2.--/min)

Regional avalanche bulletins (CHF 1.49/min)

0900 59 20 31 Central Switzerland
0900 59 20 32 Lower Valais / VD
0900 59 20 33 Upper Valais
0900 59 20 34 North and Central Grisons
0900 59 20 35 South Grisons
0900 59 20 36 Bernese Oberland
0900 59 20 37 Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

Internet: <http://www.slf.ch>

WAP: wap.slf.ch

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Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 22. March 2008

Danger level

- 1 low
- 2 MODERATE
- 3 CONSIDERABLE
- 4 HIGH
- 5 very high

