

National avalanche bulletin no. 103

for Sunday, 15 February 2009 issue date 14.2.2009, 18:30 hours

Considerable avalanche danger

Current conditions

On Saturday it was heavily overcast in northern regions, whereas in inneralpine regions there were bright spells and in southern regions it was sunny. In northern regions, there was a few centimeters of new snow. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 11 degrees. Moderate northerly winds were blowing along the Main Alpine Ridge and in Grisons, elsewhere the winds tended to be light.

The large amount of snowfall from this week in northern regions is settling only slowly. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are poorly bonded with the old snowpack in places. They are generally lightly covered over by new snow, making them difficult to recognize.

Short-term development

On Sunday it will be predominantly sunny. During the afternoon, clouds will move in from the west. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be minus 10 in western regions and minus 13 in eastern regions. Moderate northerly to northeasterly winds will prevail. In northern regions, a moderate bise wind will make itself felt.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Northern flank of the Alps; Valais; northern Ticino; Grisons; Jura:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the central part of the northern flank of the Alps not including Urseren, and additionally in the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Surselva and in Flims-Untervaz, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1600 m. Treacherous conditions prevail in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs. Avalanches can be triggered even by single persons. Naturally triggered avalanches are still possible only in isolated cases.

Along the remaining northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in the remaining parts of northern and central Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. Avalanches can be unleashed by single persons, particularly in places covered with snowdrift.

Experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards and prudent route selection are important.

In northern Ticino, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. Recently formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered by single persons.

Also in the Jura region, backcountry skiers and freeriders can trigger avalanches. The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 1400 m.

Central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1600 m. The snowdrift of recent days should be assessed with great caution.

In all regions, full depth snowslides are possible in isolated cases.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday and on Tuesday, it is expected to snow in northern regions. The danger in those regions will again increase somewhat. In southern regions it will be mostly sunny. The avalanche hazards will recede very slowly and incrementally there.

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