

National avalanche bulletin no. 50

for Saturday, 2 January 2010

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Escalating avalanche danger amidst northerly winds and snowfall

Current conditions

On New Year's Day it was predominantly overcast, accompanied by bright intervals in isolated cases. During the afternoon, light snowfall began in western and northern regions. The snowfall level was at 900 m. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 4 degrees. A light wind was blowing.

In the western and northern regions, the moist snowpack is now gradually freezing at altitudes below about 1800 m. At high altitudes on north facing slopes, the uppermost snow surface is composed of loosely packed snow widespread. Primarily in eastern and in southern regions, large scale surface hoar has formed overnight in many areas. Particularly in the Valais and in the inneralpine regions of Grisons at high altitudes, the base of the snowpack is weak in some places.

Short-term development

On Saturday in northern and in eastern regions, it is expected to be heavily overcast. In the southern Valais and in the Engadine, intermittent bright spells will be evident. In Ticino it will be generally sunny, accompanied by strong northerly foehn winds. Between Friday and Saturday afternoon on the northern flank of the Alps and in the western Lower Valais, 10 to 20 cm of snowfall is expected. In the remaining Valais, in the Gotthard region and in Grisons not including the southern valleys, 5 to 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated, elsewhere less. On Friday night temperatures will drop significantly and the snowfall level will descend down to the valleys. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 14 degrees. At high altitudes a moderate to strong northerly wind will be blowing. The wind will transport both the new fallen snow and, to some extent, the loosely packed, uppermost layer of the old snowpack in places.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge; Vaud Alps not including Prealps; Valais; Urseren; northern Ticino; Grisons:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the western and northern Lower Valais including Chablais as well as in the Vaud Alps not including the Prealps, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 2000 m. The major hazard stems from freshly accumulated snowdrift. Even a single backcountry skier or freerider can trigger slab avalanches, which can then sweep along the new fallen snow of recent days.

In the remaining northern part of the Alpine Ridge, in Urseren and in the remaining Valais, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on east to south to west facing wind loaded slopes above approximately 2000 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can easily be triggered. In addition, particularly in transition areas from shallow to deep snow, avalanches can fracture even in the old snowpack.

In northern Ticino as well as in Grisons not including the regions north of the Vorderrhein, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily in gullies and bowls, as well as in pass areas, in all expositions above approximately 2400 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can easily be triggered.

In all regions of this danger level, enormous experience is required of backcountry skiers and freeriders in the reading and assessing of the avalanche situation.

Remaining regions of the northern flank of the Alps; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all expositions above approximately 1800 m. The major hazard stems from freshly accumulated snowdrift which is primarily to be found in gullies and bowls. Avalanche prone locations become more frequent and more widely distributed with ascending altitude. The fresh snowdrift should be avoided whenever possible. A cautious route selection is essential.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On Sunday it will be predominantly sunny and cold, despite cloudbanks at high altitudes. On Monday it will be generally overcast and a small amount of snowfall is anticipated in western regions. The avalanche danger will subside only incrementally.

National avalanche bulletin as an MMS (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

Send an SMS with the corresponding key word to the speed dial number 162.

LAWINE overview of the keywords
LAWCHD national avalanche bulletin (german)

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 (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

LAWZCH Central Switzerland
LAWBVS Lower Valais / VD
LAWOVS Upper Valais
LAWNGR North and Central Grisons
LAWSGR South Grisons
LAWBEO Bernese Oberland
LAWEAN Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

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

WAP: wap.slf.ch

Teletext: Page 782 (SF DRS)

Phone: 187 (Fr. 0.50/call and min)

Feedback information:

Email: lwp@slf.ch






Free phone/fax: 0800 800 187 / 88

Avalanche danger forecast

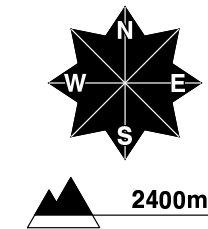
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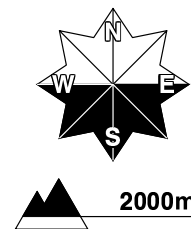
Danger level

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

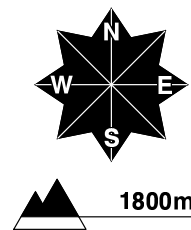
gullies and bowls



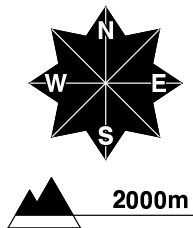
lee slopes



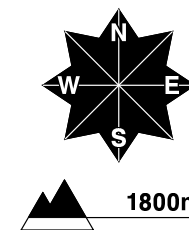
lee slopes



steep slopes



lee slopes



Andermatt

Locarno

Sion

Chur

St.Moritz

St.Gallen

Lausanne

Luzern








Avalanche danger forecast

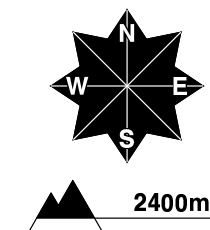
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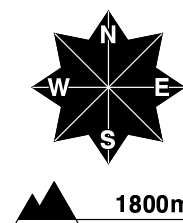
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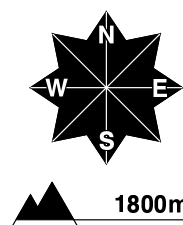
gullies and bowls



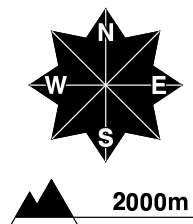
lee slopes



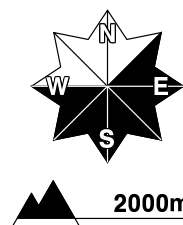
lee slopes



steep slopes



lee slopes



lee slopes

