

National avalanche bulletin no. 148

for Saturday, 21 April 2012

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Considerable avalanche danger in some regions

Current conditions

On Friday south of the Rhine-Rhone line it was partly sunny, elsewhere overcast. Since Thursday midday there has been about 10 cm of snowfall, in the furthestmost western regions and in the Bernina region as much as 20 cm of new fallen snow. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 3 degrees in northern regions and minus 1 degree in southern regions. The wind in western regions was blowing intermittently at moderate velocity, elsewhere at light strength, from westerly directions. Layers of fresh fallen and freshly drifted snow are prone to triggering in some places. Particularly in southern Valais and in Grisons, furthermore, the old snowpack on north facing slopes where the snow is relatively shallow is faceted and weak to some extent. In the remaining regions, the more deeply embedded layers of snow are generally stable.

Short-term development

On Saturday morning it will be rather sunny, subsequently clouds will move in from the west. By evening in western regions, about 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 2 degrees. The wind in northern regions will be blowing at strong velocity in some areas, elsewhere at moderate strength, from westerly directions.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge west of the Reuss; upper valleys of Visp; Simplon region; southern Goms; Urseren; northern Ticino; Main Alpine Ridge from Vals to the Bernina Pass; Bivio; St. Moritz:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the upper valleys of Visp, in the Simplon region, in southern Goms, in northern Ticino, on the Main Alpine Ridge from Vals to the Bernina Pass as well as in the regions of Bivio and St. Moritz, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2500 m. The primary hazard stems from the layers of newly fallen and newly drifted snow, which can be triggered as slab avalanches even by a single backcountry skier or freerider.

In the remaining regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes in western to northern to southeastern aspects above approximately 2500 m. Freshly fallen and freshly drifted snow can be triggered even by one single person. Areas adjacent to ridgelines and pass areas should be evaluated with particular caution.

In all regions of this danger level, caution and restraint are imperative in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs.

Regions north of the northern Alpine Ridge; northern flank of the Alps east of the Reuss; southern Lower Valais; Turtmanntal; lower valleys of Visp; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri; remaining regions of Grisons:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes in western to northern to southeastern aspects above approximately 2200 m. Layers of new fallen and newly drifted snow should be assessed with great care. Both the frequency and the size of the avalanche prone locations tend to increase with ascending altitude.

In all regions of the Swiss Alps, naturally triggered, loosely packed snowslides can be expected during the course of the day due to solar radiation. Below about 2200 m, in addition, isolated full depth avalanches are possible.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On Saturday night in northern and eastern regions in particular, snowfall is anticipated. During the day on Sunday, conditions will be unstable and changing. On Monday it will be variable, but generally dry. The avalanche danger is expected to increase slightly on Sunday, then gradually diminish on Monday.

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)

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-- Bernese Oberland
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Avalanche danger forecast

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