

## National avalanche bulletin no. 153

for Thursday, 26 April 2012

issue date 25.4.2012, 18:30 hours

### *Considerable avalanche danger due to foehn wind and high temperatures*

#### Current conditions

On Tuesday night, the skies were partially clear. In the southern and the furthestmost western regions, there was an additional 10 cm of snowfall. Following a quite sunny morning, it was heavily overcast in general during the afternoon in southern and western regions. In eastern regions it remained quite sunny. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were plus 3 degrees in northwestern regions, elsewhere it was zero degrees. The southwesterly wind was blowing at moderate to strong velocity during the day, in high alpine regions at storm strength. In northern regions, the foehn wind set in. Easily triggered snowdrift accumulations amassed which to some extent have already released naturally. Particularly in southern Valais and in Grisons, the old snowpack on north facing slopes where the snow is relatively shallow is faceted and weak in some places. In those areas more than anywhere else, avalanches can sweep along the more deeply embedded layers of the snowpack.

#### Short-term development

On Wednesday night, skies in southern regions will be predominantly overcast. From the Simplon region to Lukmanier Pass above approximately 1500 m, up to 10 cm of new fallen snow is anticipated. Elsewhere skies will be generally clear. On Thursday it will be quite sunny, in southern regions partially cloudy. The midday temperatures will increase significantly, reaching plus 8 degrees at 2000 m; in southern regions, the temperature will be plus 1 degree. The wind will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity, in high alpine regions at storm strength, from southerly to southwesterly directions. In the foehn-exposed regions, the wind will be felt way down into the valleys. Additional snowdrift accumulations will form.

#### Avalanche danger forecast for Thursday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

##### *Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)*

In Ticino, in central Grisons, in the Engadine as well as in the southern valleys of Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2200 m. The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered as avalanches even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. Due to the solar radiation, isolated naturally triggered dry avalanches are expected during the course of the day. Particularly in the indicated regions of Grisons on north facing slopes, avalanches can fracture in the old snowpack, which is weak, and attain medium size. A great deal of experience, as well as restraint, are essential on backcountry tours in outlying terrain.

On the northern flank of the Alps not including the Prealps, in the Valais, as well as in northern Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in southwestern to northern to southeastern aspects above approximately 2200 m. In the Prealps, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in northwestern to northern to eastern aspects above approximately 1800 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered as avalanches even by one single backcountry skier or freerider. They should be avoided. In addition, particularly in southern Valais on north facing slopes, isolated triggerings in the old snowpack are possible. Experience in evaluating avalanche hazards is important.

In all regions of the Swiss Alps with the exception of the southern flank of the Alps, a significant increase in the danger of wet snow avalanches and full depth snowslides is expected during the course of the day. This is particularly the case below about 2600 m. Avalanches can attain medium size. Backcountry tours and ascents to huts should be brought to an end in plenty of time.

#### Trend for Friday and Saturday

On both days it will be quite sunny. The southwesterly wind will be blowing at strong velocity, in high alpine regions at storm strength. The zero degree level will be above 3000 m. Snowdrift accumulations continue to require a high degree of attentiveness and caution, particularly in high alpine regions. The danger of wet avalanches is expected to increase significantly during the course of each day.

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

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

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##### Regional avalanche bulletins (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

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-- South Grisons  
-- Bernese Oberland  
-- Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

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# Avalanche danger forecast

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## Wet snow avalanches over the course of the day

