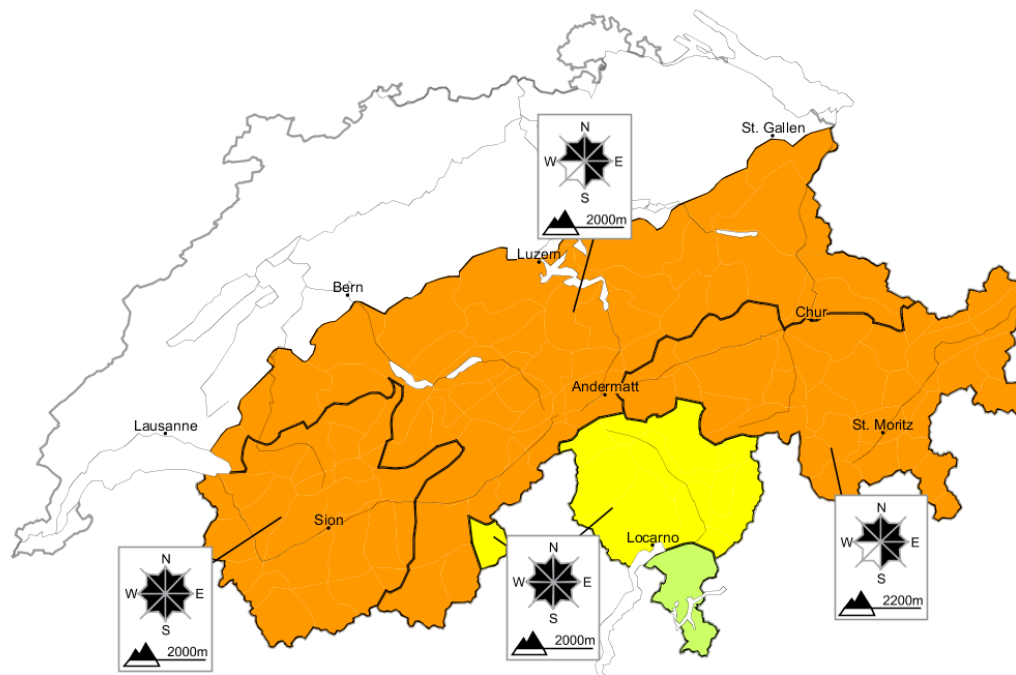


Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 19.12.2012, 08:00 / Next update: 19.12.2012, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 19.12.2012, 08:00

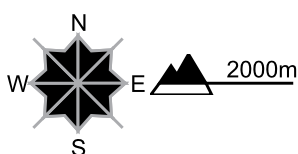


Region A Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of the last few days can be released easily or, in isolated cases, occur naturally. Medium-sized to large avalanches are still possible. Exposed parts of transportation routes are endangered in isolated cases. Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

Below approximately 2000 m more small and medium-sized full-depth avalanches are to be expected. Exposed transportation routes are endangered in some cases.

Danger levels



1 low



2 moderate



3 consider.



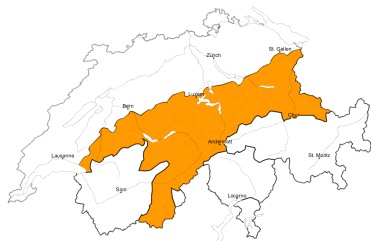
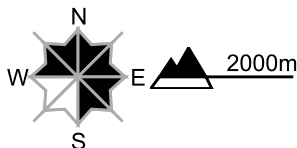
4 high



5 very high



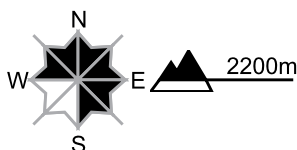
WSL Institute for Snow and
Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

Region B**Level 3, considerable****Fresh snow, old snow****Avalanche prone locations****Danger description**

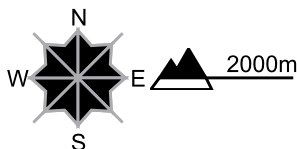
Fresh snow and snow drift accumulations can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. In addition avalanches can in isolated cases be triggered in the old snowpack and reach medium size. This applies in particular on north and east facing slopes above approximately 2200 m. Off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

In particular on the northern flank of the Alps more small to medium-sized full-depth avalanches are possible. This applies below approximately 2000 m. Exposed transportation routes are endangered in some cases.

Region C**Level 3, considerable****Snow drifts, old snow****Avalanche prone locations****Danger description**

Avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. This applies in particular on west, north and east facing slopes. Natural avalanches are possible in isolated cases. Whumping sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Especially adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas mostly small snow drift accumulations will form. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence. Off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Region D**Level 2, moderate****Snow drifts****Avalanche prone locations****Danger description**

As a consequence of the northwesterly wind mostly small snow drift accumulations will form. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

Region E

Level 1, low



Snow drifts

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular on extremely steep shady slopes.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 18.12.2012, 17:00

Snowpack

But for brief intervals, snow has been falling in the west and north in particular since Friday December 14th. The layers of fresh and drifted snow are prone to triggering.

Excepting the southern flank of the Alps, faceted weak layers exist at the base of the snowpack above approximately 2200 m, in particular on west to north to east facing slopes. In particular in the regions with relatively little fresh snow, avalanches can therefore be triggered in the weakly bonded old snowpack in some cases.

On the northern flank of the Alps and in western Lower Valais, the old snowpack is partly moist below approximately 1800 m. Here in particular, full-depth avalanches can still occur.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 18.12.2012

In the north and west, mostly very cloudy with light snowfall. Snowfall level approximately 800 m. Some bright spells in Grisons, mostly sunny in the south.

Fresh snow

The following amounts of snow fell above approximately 1800 m in the period from Friday morning until Tuesday evening:

- Extreme west of and northern Lower Valais, Lötschental: 80 to 120 cm; in the regions bordering France: up to 140 cm in some localities
- Chablais, Vaud and Fribourg Alps: 50 to 80 cm
- Rest of the northern flank of the Alps excluding Urseren, rest of Lower Valais and northern Upper Valais: 30 to 50 cm
- Southern Upper Valais, Gotthard region, northern Grisons, Engadine: 15 to 30 cm; less elsewhere

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: about -6 degrees in the north and -3 degrees in the south

Wind

During the night, light to moderate from the west, but up to strong on the northern flank of the Alps and in Valais. During the day over a wide area, moderate from the west to north.

Weather forecast until Wednesday, 19.12.2012

Light snowfall in the west and north during the night. Snowfall level approximately 700 m. Mostly sunny during the day in the mountains.

Fresh snow

By Wednesday morning the following amounts of snow will fall:

- Northern flank of the Alps, northern Grisons: 10 to 20 cm
- Valais, Gotthard region, central Grisons: up to 10 cm

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: climbing to -1 degree in the west, about -4 degrees in the east and south

Wind

Light to moderate northwesterly wind, strong at times in the high Alpine regions

Outlook until Friday, 21.12.2012

Thursday

On Thursday, precipitation will arrive from the west and a strong westerly wind will pick up during the day. The snowfall level will briefly rise to 1500 m. In the north in particular, fresh snow drift accumulations will form during the day.

Friday

On Friday the wind will be westerly. The skies will be mostly cloudy, and snow will fall from time to time above 1000 m. The avalanche danger will increase in some regions.