Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 30 January 2013

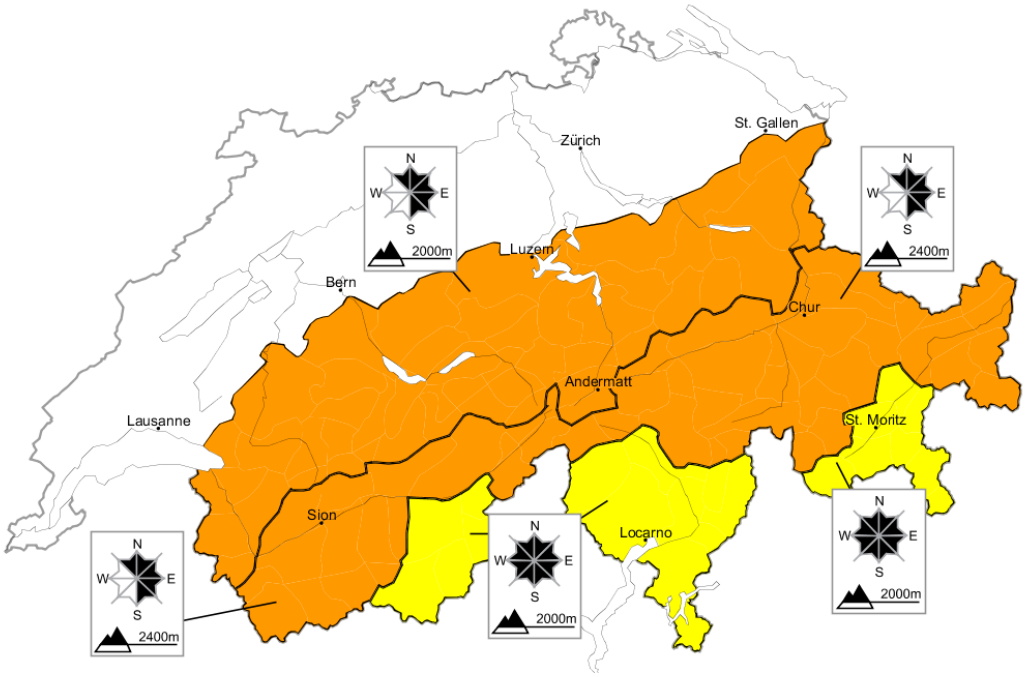
30.1.2013, 07:50

Snow drift accumulations at high altitude. Full-depth and wet avalanches at intermediate altitudes

Edition: 30.1.2013, 08:00 / Next update: 30.1.2013, 17:00

Avalanche danger

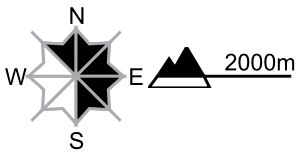
updated on 30.1.2013, 08:00



Region A — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of the westerly wind further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released easily or, in isolated cases, naturally. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

On steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are to be expected. They can be released at any time of day or night. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks. As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation mostly small moist and west avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m.

Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

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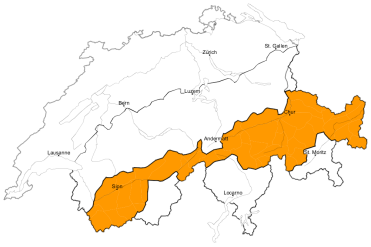
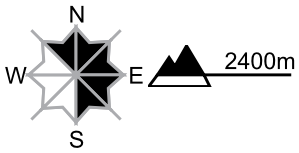
Region B — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



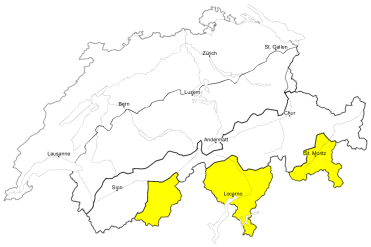
Danger description

As a consequence of the strong wind further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released by a single winter sport participant. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger. Southern Valais, central Grisons and Engadine: In very isolated cases avalanches can be released in deep layers and reach medium size. Caution is to be exercised in particular on little-used, rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

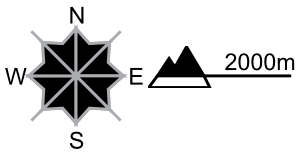
On steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are to be expected. They can be released at any time of day or night. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks. As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation mostly small moist avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m.

Region C — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. They can be released easily, but they will be small in most cases. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and the danger is level 3 (considerable). Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection. Southern Upper Valais and Engadine: In very isolated cases avalanches can be released in deep layers and reach medium size. Caution is to be exercised in particular on little-used, rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes.

Full-depth avalanches

On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are to be expected. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 29.1.2013, 17:00

Snowpack

Avalanches can be released in the near-surface layers of the snowpack in particular. Especially on the northern flank of the Alps and in Lower Valais, a strong westerly wind has given rise to fresh snow drift accumulations. These are to be found in particular on north and east facing slopes above the tree line; they are not bonding well with the loose surface of the old snowpack. At intermediate altitudes, the surface of the snowpack has become moist as a consequence of rain. North of a line between the Rhone and Rhine and in southern Lower Valais and the central part of the southern flank of the Alps, the deeper layers of the snowpack are mostly well bonded. In southern Upper Valais and the rest of Grisons, these layers are faceted and weak in some cases. Here, in very isolated cases, avalanches can be triggered in the old snowpack and reach medium size, in particular in areas with shallow snow cover in west to north to east facing aspects.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 29.1.2013

Northern flank of the Alps and Valais: mostly cloudy with some bright spells. From the middle of the day, light precipitation moved in from the west; the snowfall level was approximately 1400 m
Ticino and Grisons: Mostly sunny at first, but increasingly cloudy in the afternoon

Fresh snow
Valais and northern flank of the Alps: a few centimetres

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: about 0 degrees

Wind
Northern flank of the Alps and Valais: moderate to strong from the west to southwest, storm force at times in the afternoon
Ticino and Grisons: light to moderate from the west

Weather forecast until Wednesday, 30.1.2013

On Tuesday night, some snow will fall on the northern flank of the Alps and in Grisons. The snowfall level will rise to 2000 m during Tuesday night. During the day it will be quite sunny at first. As the day progresses, cloud will build up from the west, and snowfall will commence towards the evening. The snowfall level will drop to 1300 m.

Fresh snow
Northern flank of the Alps, Lower Valais and northern Grisons: 5 to 10 cm above approximately 2200 m

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between +2 degrees in the north and +5 degrees in the south

Wind
Moderate to strong, but storm force west to northwesterly on the northern flank of the Alps and in the high Alpine regions. Further, mostly compact snow drift accumulations will form.

Outlook until Friday, 1.2.2013

Thursday
Snow will fall during the night, in particular in the north. Quite sunny during the day in the north once the residual cloud disperses. It will be mostly sunny in the south. The strong westerly wind will persist. The avalanche danger will not change significantly.

Friday
In the north the weather will be mostly cloudy with some bright spells. In the south it will be sunny at first, before becoming increasingly cloudy. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease. The danger of full-depth avalanches will persist.