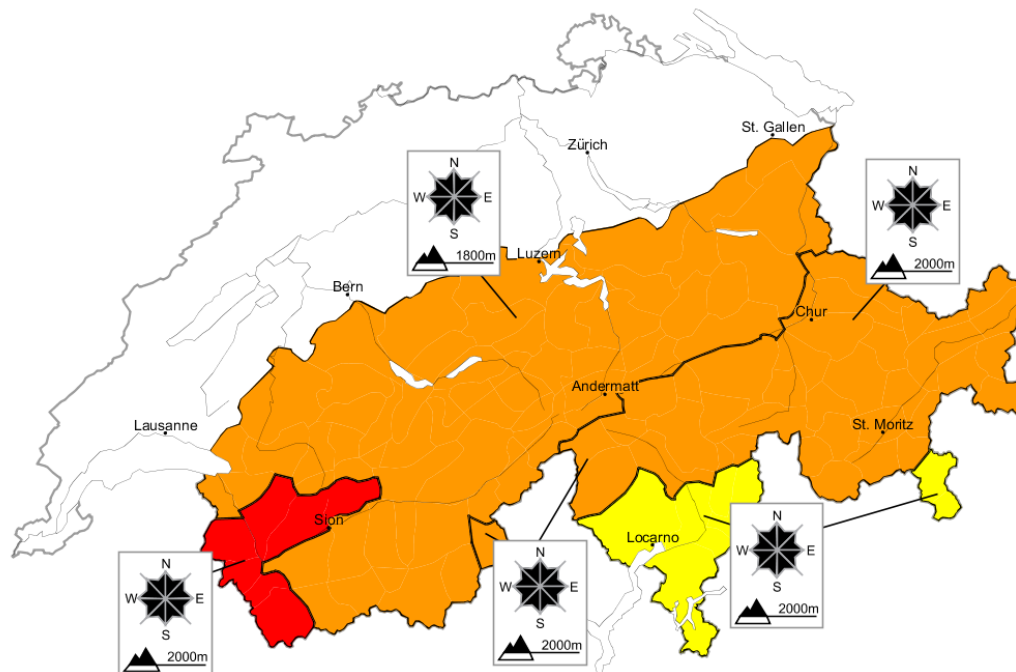


A critical avalanche situation will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 2.2.2013, 08:00 / Next update: 2.2.2013, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 2.2.2013, 08:00



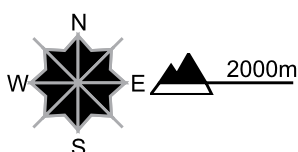
Region A

Level 4, high



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind the snow drift accumulations will increase in size substantially. Numerous medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large avalanches are to be expected. In the runout zone avalanches can entrain the wet snow. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for great caution and restraint. Exposed parts of transportation routes are endangered in the majority of cases in particular in the extreme west of Lower Valais.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

Full-depth and wet avalanches are to be expected, in particular below approximately 2000 m.

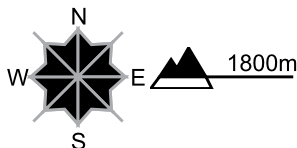
Region B

Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind the snow drift accumulations will increase in size substantially. Small and medium-sized avalanches are to be expected. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant or triggered naturally. In particular in the west individual large avalanches are possible especially from starting zones at higher altitudes. In the runout zone avalanches can entrain the wet snow, in particular in the west and in Valais. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for great caution and restraint. Exposed parts of transportation routes are endangered in isolated cases.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

Full-depth and wet avalanches are to be expected, in particular below approximately 2000 m.

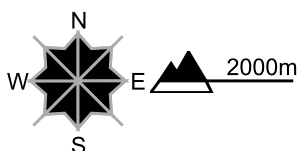
Region C

Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released by a single winter sport participant. Avalanches can be released in deep layers of the snowpack and reach medium size in some cases. This applies especially in central Grisons and in Engadine. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

Northern Grisons: On steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

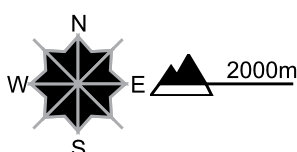
Region D

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The mostly small snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. They are mostly easy to recognise and can in some cases be released easily. Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 1.2.2013, 17:00

Snowpack

Amidst persistently strong velocity winds and new fallen snow, wide ranging snow drift accumulations are forming anew in many places. On the northern flank of the Alps, in the Lower Valais and in northern Grisons, they are being deposited on top of a smooth surfaced melt-freeze crust below about 2200 to 2400 m. In the remaining regions and at high altitudes the fresh fallen snow is being deposited atop a highly irregular snowpack surface. The bonding between the new fallen and drifted snow masses and the old snowpack beneath it is in many places unfavourable. On the northern flank of the Alps, the snow cover below approximately 1500 m is thoroughly wet.

In the southern Upper Valais and in Grisons there are intermediate and more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack which are to some extent faceted and weak. Particularly on west to north to east facing slopes in those regions, dry avalanches can fracture in the old snow cover in isolated cases. In the remaining regions, fractures in the layers of the snow cover nearest to the ground are not likely.

Observed weather on Friday, 1.2.2013

It has been heavily overcast. In northern and western regions there has been snowfall. The snowfall level lay intermittently at approximately 1800 m.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and Friday evening above 2000 m the following amounts of new fallen snow were registered:

- western and central sectors of northern flank of the Alps and Valais, 10 to 20 cm, from place to place in the Valais as much as 30 cm
- remaining sectors of northern flank of the Alps, Gotthard region and northern Grisons, maximum 10 cm, elsewhere dry

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, about zero degrees

Wind

Moderate to strong velocity, at high altitudes intermittently storm strength westerly winds

Weather forecast until Saturday, 2.2.2013

In northern regions it will be heavily overcast and snowfall is anticipated. The snowfall level is expected to drop to below 1000 m by Saturday morning. During the night snowfall will be heaviest in western regions. Only in the furthestmost regions to the south will there be brief spells of brightness.

Fresh snow

By Saturday afternoon, the following amounts of new fallen snow are expected:

- northern flank of the Alps, Lower Valais and northern Valais, 30 to 50 cm; Chablais and westernmost Lower Valais, as much as 70 cm
- remaining Valais, Gotthard region, northern Grisons, northern Engadine, 15 to 30 cm
- further to the south, less

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, in northern regions minus 9 degrees, in southern regions minus 6 degrees

Wind

Strong velocity, in high alpine regions storm strength winds, from westerly directions during the night, shifting to northerly during the course of the day

Outlook until Monday, 4.2.2013

On Sunday and Monday skies will be heavily overcast in general. In the Valais and in Ticino it will be partly sunny. It is expected to remain cold, amidst moderate to strong velocity northerly winds. For all backcountry skiing and freeriding tours in outlying terrain away from secured ski slopes the avalanche situation will remain critical.