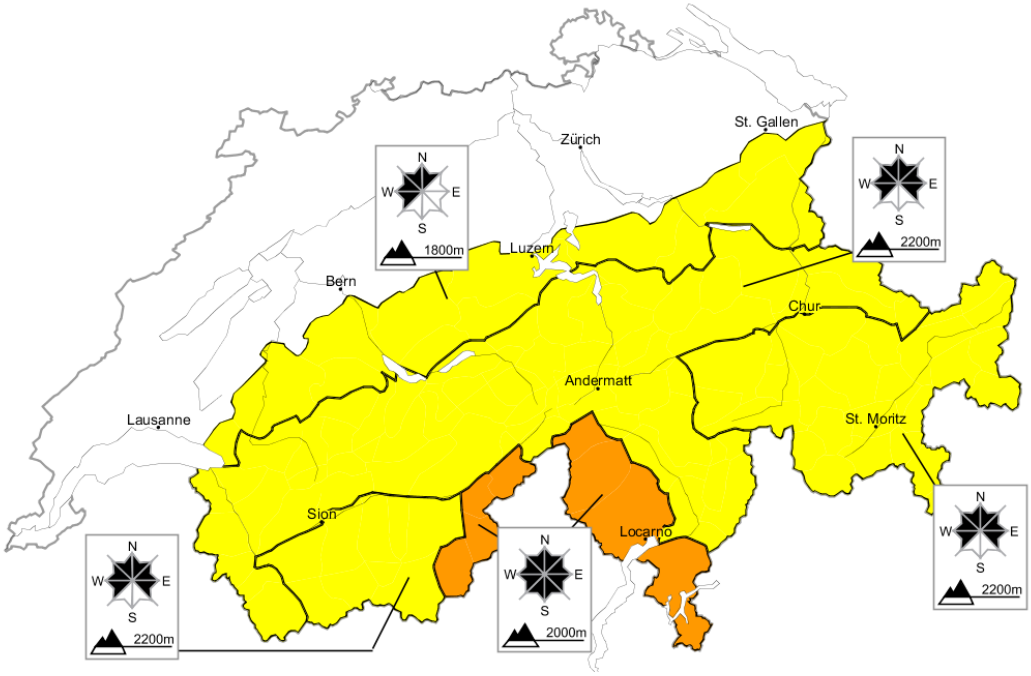
From Saas Fee via Binntal to western Ticino a considerable avalanche danger will prevail

Edition: 26.2.2013, 08:00 / Next update: 26.2.2013, 17:00

Avalanche danger

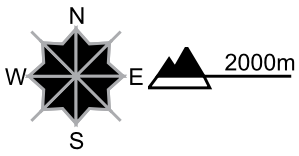
updated on 26.2.2013, 08:00



Region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



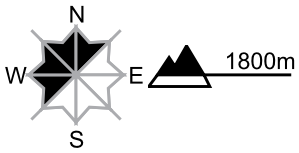
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are poorly bonded with the old snowpack. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant. In Valais and in the Mendrisio area individual natural avalanches are possible. As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation more frequent moist snow slides are to be expected. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Region B — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



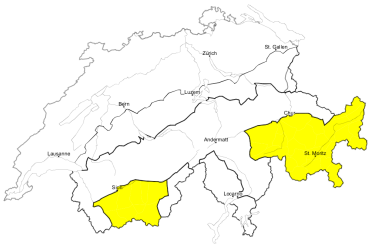
Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. They are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. The snow drift accumulations are mostly small but can in some cases be released easily. Restraint should be exercised in view of the danger of being buried, but in particular because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Full-depth avalanches

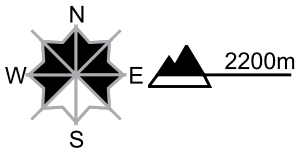
In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible. As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation more frequent moist snow slides are possible.

Region C — Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in very isolated cases be released in deep layers and reach medium size. Caution is to be exercised in particular on little-used, rather lightly snow-covered slopes. Careful route selection is advisable.

Snow drifts

The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released easily, but they will be small in most cases. They are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and exist in all aspects. Restraint should be exercised in view of the danger of being buried, but in particular because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

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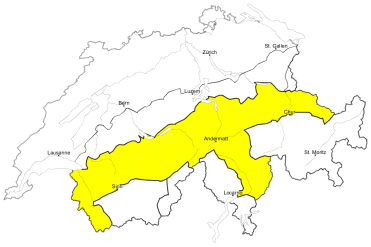
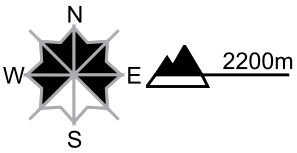
Region D — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. They are mostly small but can be released easily. The snow drift accumulations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and exist in all aspects. Restraint should be exercised in view of the danger of being buried, but in particular because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Full-depth avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 25.2.2013, 17:00

Snowpack

In the south, fresh and drifted snow are lying on a weakly bonded old snowpack and are prone to triggering.
Below the tree line on the northern flank of the Alps, 5 to 15 cm of very loosely bonded snow, and even as much as 40 cm in some localities, is to be found over a wide area as a consequence of the precipitation from low stratus cloud in the last few days. It will be transported by the freshening easterly wind, in the Prealps in particular. The fresh snow drift accumulations are bonding poorly with the already poorly bonded old snowpack.
In particular in the inneralpine regions of Valais, and in central Grisons, Engadine and Val Müstair, middle and deep layers of the snowpack are faceted and weak in some cases. Here, very isolated avalanches can be triggered in deep layers of the snowpack and reach medium size. These conditions are to be found, in particular, on little used very steep slopes with shallow snow cover. In the other regions, the bonding of the snowpack is mostly favourable.
Below approximately 2400 m, the prevalence of full-depth avalanches is expected to increase.

Observed weather on Monday, 25.2.2013

On the main Alpine ridge and to the south, the weather was cloudy. Further north, it was mostly sunny. In the Simplon region and Ticino in particular, snow fell even at low altitudes.

Fresh snow
The following amounts of snow fell in the period from Sunday evening until Monday afternoon:
· Simplon region and Sotto Ceneri: 30 to 40 cm
· Rest of the main Alpine ridge in Upper Valais, western Ticino: 10 to 20 cm
· Other regions: 0 to 5 cm

Temperature
The weather became milder. At midday at 2000 m, the temperature was about -7 °C in the north and -9 °C in the south.

Wind
The southeasterly wind was mostly light, but moderate to strong in some localities on the northern Alpine ridge from Les Diablerets to the Titlis.

Weather forecast until Tuesday, 26.2.2013

During the night, some snow will fall over a wide area on the main Alpine ridge in Valais and in western Ticino; the heaviest snowfall will occur from the Monte Rosa to the Simplon region. During the day, the weather will be mostly sunny everywhere at first. In the afternoon cloud will build up from the east.

Fresh snow
By Tuesday evening the following amounts of snow will fall:
· Monte Rosa and Simplon region: 15 to 30 cm
· Rest of the main Alpine ridge in Valais, rest of Upper Valais, Valle Maggia, Sotto Ceneri: 5 to 10 cm

Temperature
Climbing to -5 °C by the middle of the day at 2000 m

Wind
Generally at elevated altitudes and in the Prealps as well during the day, the wind will be moderate, changing direction from southeast to easterly

Outlook until Thursday, 28.2.2013

On Tuesday night, a few snowflakes will fall in the northeast and in Engadine. Thereafter, it will be mostly sunny throughout the Swiss Alps. The weather will become steadily milder. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease slowly. The danger of full-depth avalanches will increase slightly.