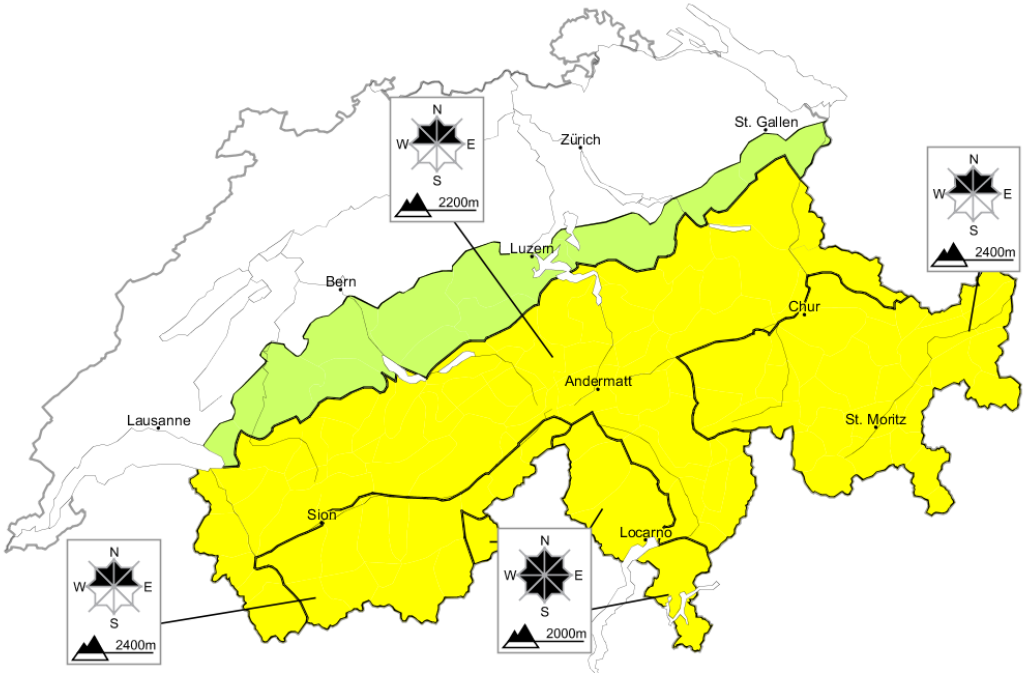
Moderate avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

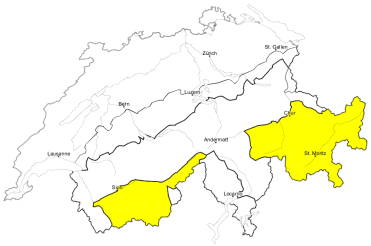
Edition: 5.4.2013, 08:00 / Next update: 5.4.2013, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 5.4.2013, 08:00

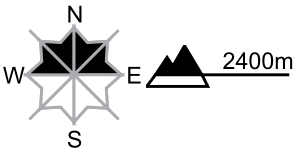


Region A — Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The somewhat older snow drift accumulations can still be released in some cases. In addition avalanches can in very isolated cases penetrate deep layers and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are rather rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for careful route selection.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Isolated wet snow slides and avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. In the event of prolonged bright spells this applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes.

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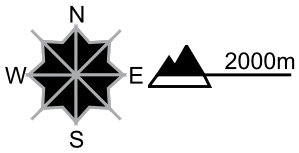
Region B — Level 2, moderate

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



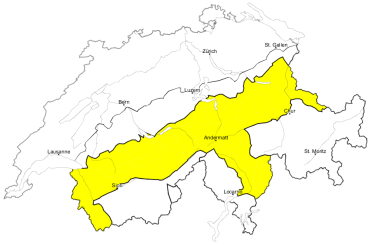
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence. Off-piste activities call for meticulous route selection.

Wet avalanches

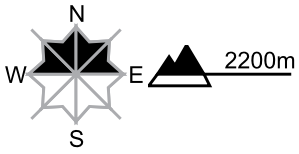
Moist snow slides are to be expected below approximately 2000 m.

Region C — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of the southerly wind mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. This applies in particular on near-ridge west, north and east facing slopes. They are to be assessed with care and prudence. Deeper layers of the snowpack can be released in very isolated cases in particular on very steep north facing slopes. Careful route selection is recommended.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Isolated wet snow slides and avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. In the event of prolonged bright spells this applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes.

Region D — Level 1, low

Favourable situation

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Wet snow slides and avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. In the event of prolonged bright spells this applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 4.4.2013, 17:00

Snowpack

The snow depths at 2000 m are as follows: on the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Lower Valais, 200 to 300 cm; in the remaining western parts of Lower Valais and in northern Upper Valais, in the Gotthard region, in northern Grisons and on the southern flank of the Alps: 120 to 200 cm; in the remaining parts of southern Valais, in central Grisons and in the Engadine: 50 to 120 cm of snow. The snow depths in the Prealps, in the western sector of the northern flank of the Alps and in the Valais are above average. In the central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Grisons, in the Engadine and in Val Müstair snow depths are average. In central Grisons and in the remaining parts of the southern flank of the Alps snow depths are below average. There is an area wide snow cover above 800 to 1200 m on north facing slopes. On south facing slopes the snow line lies approximately 400 m higher; in the Valais and in southern regions as much as 800 m higher.
On north facing slopes there is surface hoar on top of the snowpack surface to some extent; on south facing slopes there is a melt-freeze crust capable of bearing loads. The layers of snow nearest to the uppermost surface are still prone to triggering on very steep north facing slopes more than anywhere else. The intermediate and more deeply embedded layers inside the snow cover are favourably structured for the most part on the northern flank of the Alps. Nevertheless, in southern Valais, in central Grisons, in the Engadine, in Val Poschiavo and in the Münstertal, there are weak, faceted layers evident within the snow cover. In these regions more than anywhere else, avalanches can be triggered in the more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack from place to place and attain medium size.

Observed weather on Thursday, 4.4.2013

In northern regions it was predominantly sunny to begin with. During the course of the day cloud moved in from the southwest. On the southern flank of the Alps and in southern Valais skies were generally overcast accompanied by light snowfall.

Fresh snow
On the southern flank of the Alps, just a few centimeters

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between 0° C in northern regions and -2° C in southern regions

Wind
Light to moderate velocity southerly winds

Weather forecast until Friday, 5.4.2013

Skies will be heavily overcast in general. Particularly in southern regions there will be snowfall above approximately 1200 m. In northern regions light snow showers are possible, in the inneralpine regions there may be bright intervals.

Fresh snow
Above approximately 2000 m on the southern flank of the Alps and in the Engadine, 5 to 15 cm; in Sotto Ceneri as much as 20 cm; elsewhere just a few centimeters

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, -1 °C

Wind
Predominantly light northerly winds

Outlook until Sunday, 7.4.2013

On Saturday skies will be variably cloudy in northern regions accompanied by light snow showers. In the Valais and on the southern flank of the Alps it will be partly sunny. On Sunday in northern regions skies will be overcast to start with and turn increasingly sunny during the course of the day. In southern regions it will be partly sunny. Temperatures are expected to drop somewhat. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease incrementally. The activity of wet snow avalanches will remain marginal.