Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 18 January 2014

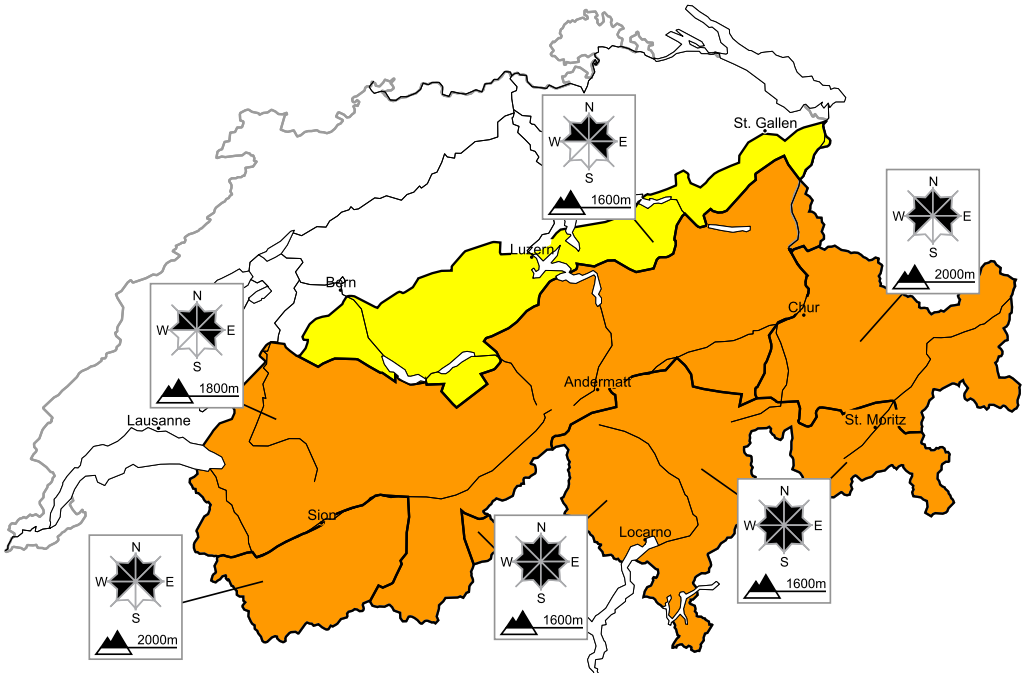
18.1.2014, 07:28

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 18.1.2014, 08:00 / Next update: 18.1.2014, 17:00

Avalanche danger

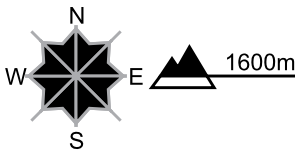
updated on 18.1.2014, 08:00



Region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Older snow drift accumulations are in some cases still prone to triggering. As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind further snow drift accumulations will form, in particular at high altitudes and in high Alpine regions. These can be released by a single winter sport participant. In particular on shady slopes small and, in isolated cases, medium-sized natural avalanches are possible as the day progresses. Off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and great restraint.

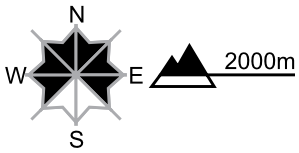
Full-depth avalanches

On cut and grassy slopes small avalanches are possible as a consequence of the fresh snow.

Region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



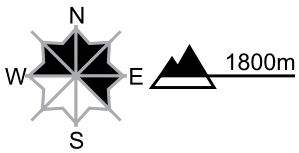
Danger description

As a consequence of the strong wind extensive snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released easily. They are to be bypassed as far as possible. Additionally avalanches can penetrate near-ground layers of the snowpack, especially on north facing slopes. These avalanche prone locations are difficult to recognise. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Region C — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



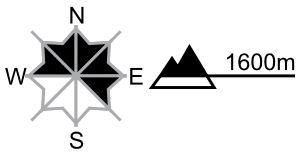
Danger description

Older snow drift accumulations are in some cases still prone to triggering. As a consequence of the strong wind further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released easily in particular on shady slopes. They are to be bypassed as far as possible. Off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

Region D — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. These are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Avalanches can be released in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack. At high altitude the prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase. Careful route selection is required.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
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Snowpack and weather

updated on 17.1.2014, 17:00

Snowpack

More than anywhere else at high altitudes of the Main Alpine Ridge, wide ranging snowdrift accumulations are forming as a result of wind and snowfall. They will be deposited on top of a loosely packed old snow cover on shady slopes in particular and are prone to triggering. Older snowdrift accumulations in all regions of the Swiss Alps are to some extent still trigger sensitive, and are difficult to recognize.
In addition, particularly in central Valais, in southern Lower Valais, in northern and central Grisons, in the Lower Engadine and in Val Müstair, the snow layering of the old snow cover is unfavourable. In those regions on north facing slopes in particular, avalanches can in some places fracture all the way down to the ground level layers of the snowpack. In the remaining regions, avalanches triggering in more deeply embedded layers of the snowpack are less likely.

Observed weather on Friday, 17.1.2014

Last night there was snowfall across widespread areas. During the day today there was a small additional amount of snowfall in eastern and southern regions in particular. In western regions bright intervals appeared during the afternoon. The snowfall level in northern regions was at about 1000 m, in southern regions at about 300 m.

Fresh snow
Between Thursday evening and Friday evening above approximately 1200 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered:
- Main Alpine Ridge from Gotthard Pass to Bernina Pass and southwards thereof: 20 to 40 cm
- western sector of northern flank of the Alps, western Lower Valais: 10 to 20 cm; in furthermost western regions as much as 30 cm
- elsewhere, just a few centimeters or it remained dry

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m -3 °C

Wind
During the night at high altitudes, moderate to strong velocity southerly winds to begin with, during the day today predominantly at moderate strength

Weather forecast through Saturday, 18.1.2014

In northern regions, foehn-induced bright intervals to start with, before clouds move in from the west. In southern regions light snowfall is expected to set in during the night. The precipitation will intensify over the course of the day and then spread somewhat across the Main Alpine Ridge to northern regions. The snowfall level will be at approximately 1000 m.

Fresh snow
Between Friday evening and Saturday evening the following amounts of new fallen snow are anticipated above approximately 1200 m:
- Main Alpine Ridge from Monte Rosa into the Bernina region and southwards thereof: 10 to 20 cm; from place to place as much as 30 cm
- bordering regions: 5 to 10 cm, in northern regions it will remain dry

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m +1 °C in northern regions and -5 °C in southern regions

Wind
At high altitudes, moderate to strong velocity southwesterly winds to begin with, then intensifying to strong velocity across widespread areas towards evening

Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 18 January 2014

Outlook through Monday, 20.1.2014

Sunday

In northern regions skies will be variably cloudy accompanied by foehn-induced bright spells. On the Main Alpine Ridge from Saas-Fee into the Bernina region and southwards thereof, persistent snowfall is expected. The snowfall level will be at approximately 1000 m.
The avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly in northern regions. In southern regions, the hazards can from region to region increase to danger level 4, high.

Monday

In northern regions skies will be variably cloudy and a small amount of snowfall is anticipated above approximately 1000 m. In southern regions the precipitation will come to a close. The avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly in northern regions; in southern regions it will diminish somewhat.