Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 25 January 2014

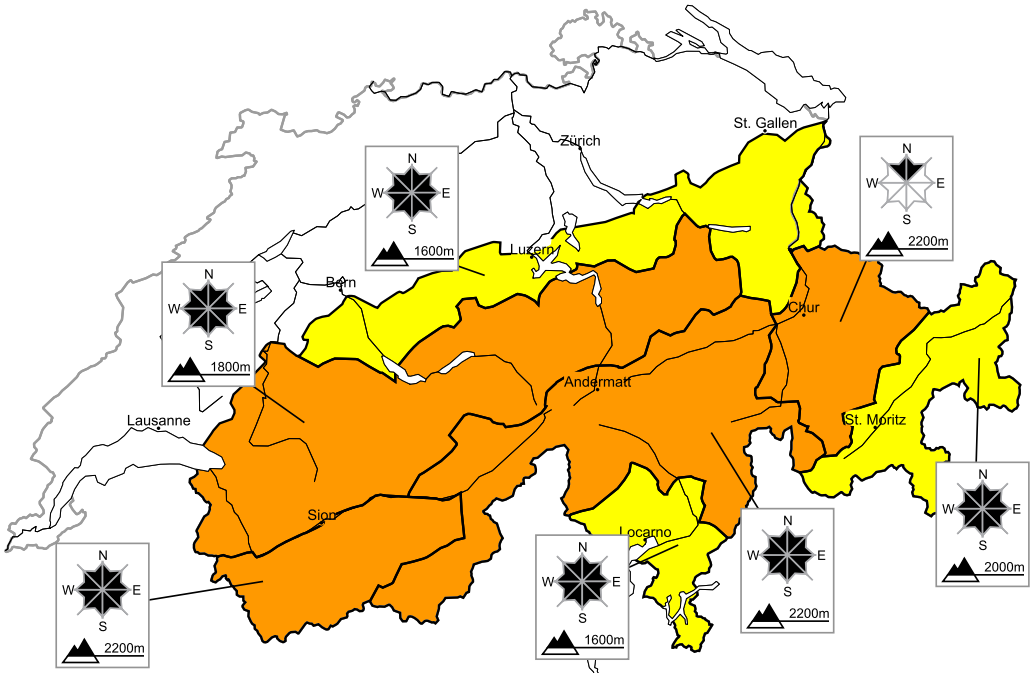
25.1.2014, 07:44

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 25.1.2014, 08:00 / Next update: 25.1.2014, 17:00

Avalanche danger

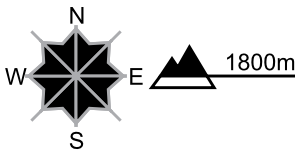
updated on 25.1.2014, 08:00



Region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Over a wide area fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on surface hoar. As a consequence of the northerly wind further snow drift accumulations will form. Even single snow sport participants can release avalanches. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

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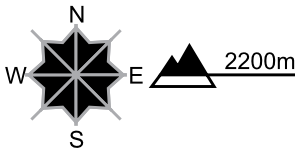
Region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



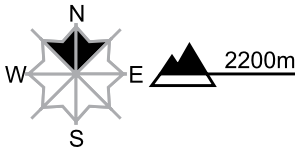
Danger description

Over a wide area fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on surface hoar. As a consequence of the northerly wind further snow drift accumulations will form. The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released easily. They are to be avoided.
Additionally avalanches can be released in the old snowpack, especially on very steep 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

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

In particular on very steep north facing slopes avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow. The 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.

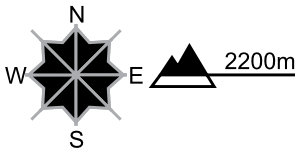
Snow drifts

Over a wide area snow drift accumulations are lying on surface hoar. As a consequence of the northerly wind further snow drift accumulations will form, in particular on south facing slopes. The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be found adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas in all aspects. They are to be avoided in steep terrain.

Region D — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of the northerly wind the snow drift accumulations will increase in size additionally. Over a wide area snow drift accumulations are lying on surface hoar. Even single snow sport participants can release avalanches. Fresh snow drift accumulations are to be avoided.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

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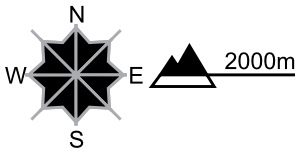
Region E — Level 2, moderate

Old snow, snow drifts

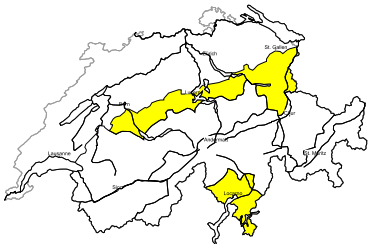
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

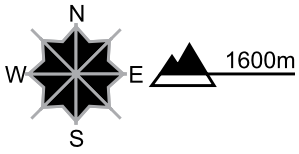
Weak layers in the lower part of the snowpack can be released especially by large additional loads in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack. Caution is to be exercised in particular on very steep shady slopes in Lower Engadine.
As a consequence of the northerly wind the previously small snow drift accumulations will increase in size. They can be released easily. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in high Alpine regions and on south facing slopes. The snow drift accumulations are to be bypassed in steep terrain.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The snow drift accumulations are mostly small but can be released easily. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain. Careful route selection is required.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 24.1.2014, 17:00

Snowpack

On the southern flank of the Alps and in the Upper Engadine the snowpack is favourably layered. The snow layering is least favourable in central Valais, in southern Lower Valais, in northern and central Grisons, in the Lower Engadine and in Val Müstair. In those regions, particularly on very steep north facing slopes, avalanches can sometimes fracture down to the lowermost layers or trigger in the deeply embedded, faceted layers of the snowpack. The likelihood of the old snowpack triggering is incrementally diminishing in these regions as well, but possible avalanches can still attain dangerously large size.
More than anywhere else on the northern flank of the Alps and in the Valais, the surface hoar has now been blanketed over by new fallen snow. As a result of northerly winds, small to medium sized, to some extent easily triggered snowdrift accumulations have been created.

Observed weather on Friday, 24.1.2014

In northern regions to begin with, skies were heavily overcast in general and there was light snowfall above approximately 600 m. During the course of the day, skies brightened up from the west. South of the Main Alpine Ridge it was predominantly sunny.

Fresh snow
Above approximately 1000 m:
· western sector of northern flank of the Alps, northern Valais: 20 to 30 cm, from place to place as much as 40 cm
· central and eastern sectors of northern flank of the Alps, remaining Valais: 10 to 20 cm
· northern and central Grisons, Silvretta, Samnaun: 5 to 10 cm

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m between -10 °C in northern regions and -8 °C in southern regions

Wind
Thursday during the night in western and northern regions, moderate strength westerly winds were blowing. During the day on Friday they slackened off to light-to-moderate velocity; on the Main Alpine Ridge and in southern regions, moderate to strong velocity northerly winds prevailed.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 25.1.2014

It will be predominantly sunny accompanied by high altitude cloudbanks. During the afternoon denser cloud cover will move in from the west.

Fresh snow
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Temperature
At midday at 2000 m -4 °C in northern regions and -1 °C in southern regions

Wind
A moderate strength northerly wind, at high altitudes intermittently stronger, will be blowing. The snowdrift accumulations will continue to grow in frequency and size.

Outlook through Monday, 27.1.2014

On Sunday and Monday skies in northern regions will be heavily overcast and intermittent snowfall down to low lying areas is anticipated. South of the Main Alpine Ridge it will be generally sunny on Sunday, accompanied by strong northerly winds. On Monday skies will be partially overcast. The avalanche danger is expected to increase over widespread areas on Sunday, then not change significantly on Monday.