Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 2 January 2015

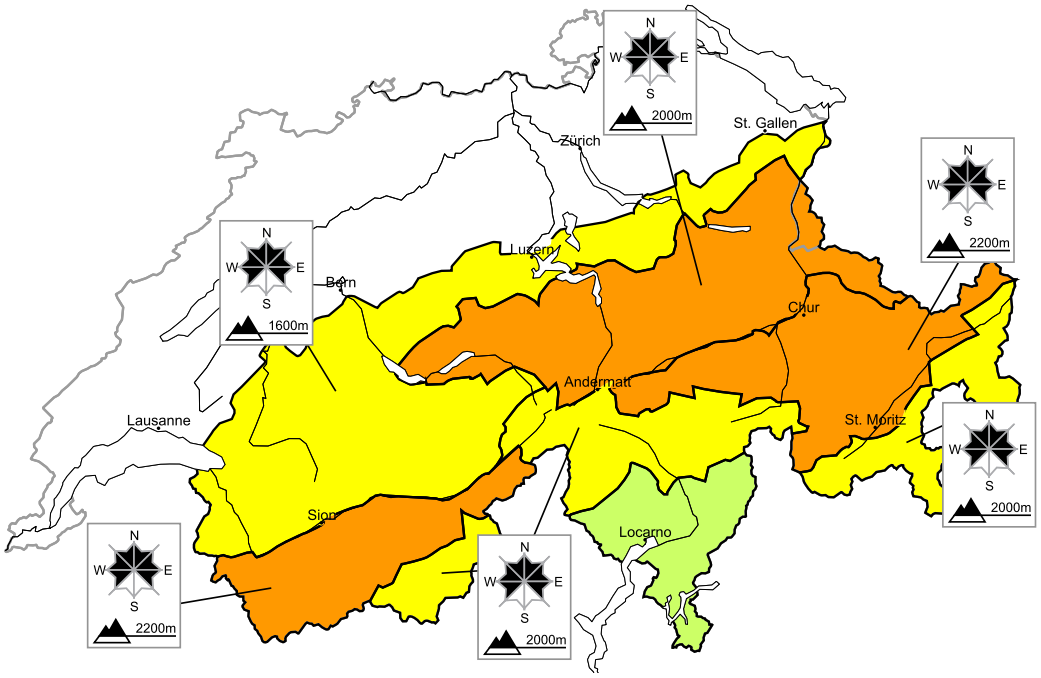
2.1.2015, 07:43

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 2.1.2015, 08:00 / Next update: 2.1.2015, 17:00

Avalanche danger

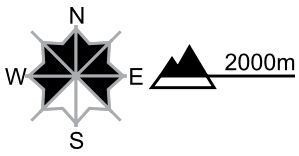
updated on 2.1.2015, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in particular be released in near-surface layers of the snowpack. The avalanche prone locations are difficult to recognise. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including medium-sized ones. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.
The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

Full-depth avalanches

Full-depth avalanches are to be expected at low and intermediate altitudes. Slides can occur on cut slopes.

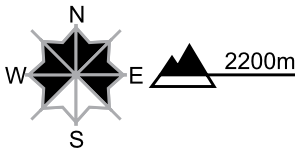
Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region B — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, snow drifts

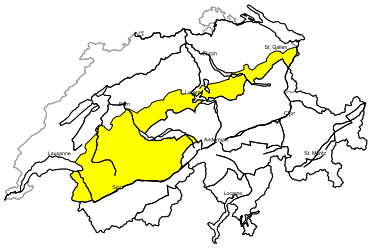
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

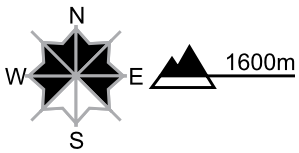
Avalanches can in particular be triggered in the old snowpack and reach medium size in isolated cases. They can be released easily. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack and fresh avalanches indicate the danger. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience and restraint.
The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



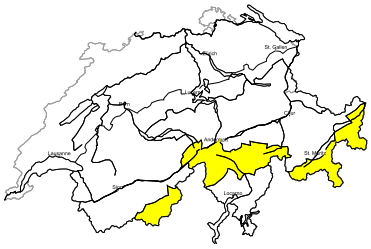
Danger description

Avalanches can in particular be released in near-surface layers of the snowpack. Mostly they are small but in some cases easily released. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection. The prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude.
The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

Full-depth avalanches

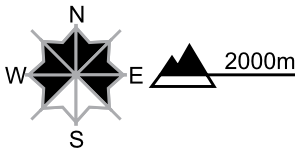
Full-depth avalanches are to be expected in particular at intermediate altitudes.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



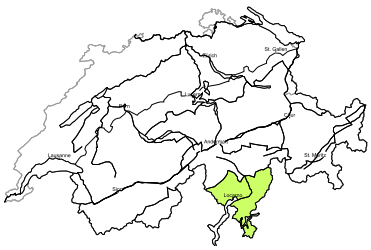
Danger description

Avalanches can in particular be released in near-surface layers of the snowpack. Mostly they are small but in some cases easily released. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection. The prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude.
The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region E

Level 1, low



Favourable situation

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

Snowpack and weather

updated on 1.1.2015, 17:00

Snowpack

The layers of new fallen snow which fell in the final week of the year, and which in many places are quite deep, have settled and consolidated in northern regions, more than anything else due to the influence of milder temperatures. At high altitudes the snow cover currently evidences heavy indications of wind impact over widespread areas. At high altitudes in particular, layers of fresh fallen and freshly drifted snow have been deposited on top of weak, faceted layers of old snow. Numerous avalanches were triggered in these old snowpack layers by people on New Year's Eve and on New Year's Day, with particular frequency in northern Grisons. The avalanches which were triggered attained impressive size. At intermediate and low altitudes, the snow on steep, grass-covered slopes is sliding in bulk across the ground. Small to medium-sized full depth snowslides have released most of all in the regions where the amounts of fresh fallen snow have been greatest.
On the southern flank of the Alps the snow cover is structured more favourably, it is well consolidated over widespread areas. Potential avalanches there are likelier to fracture in the uppermost layers of the snow cover for the most part. During the course of those nights in which clear skies prevail, surface hoar tends to form over widespread areas.

Observed weather on Thursday, 1.1.2015

On New Year's Day it was sunny in the Swiss Alps. The uppermost ceiling of the high fog lay at approximately 1200 m.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

The midday temperature at 2000 m was approximately +6 °C in western and southern regions; and +4 °C in eastern regions.

Wind

The northeasterly wind was blowing at light to moderate strength for the most part. The bise winds on the northern flank of the Alps and in the Jura were blowing at strong velocity in places.

Weather forecast through Friday, 2.1.2015

Following a night of clear skies in the Swiss Alps, it is expected to be predominantly sunny during the early morning hours. Subsequently over the course of the morning, cloud cover will swiftly move in from the northwest. In the afternoon on the northern flank of the Alps, light precipitation is expected to set in. The snowfall level will be between 800 and 1600 m.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +3 °C in northern regions and +5 °C in southern regions

Wind

Winds will shift to northwesterly and be blowing generally at moderate strength, at strong velocity in high alpine regions.

Outlook through Sunday, 4.1.2015

In northern regions, skies will range from variably cloudy to heavily overcast on both days. Snowfall is anticipated, only a small amount down to approximately 1500 m on Saturday; on Sunday the snowfall will intensify and extend down to low altitudes. Winds from northwesterly directions will be blowing at strong to storm velocity for the most part. In southern regions it will be sunny by and large. The danger of dry avalanches is expected to diminish somewhat on Saturday, then increase again on Sunday in northern regions in particular. On Saturday, as a result of rainfall at low and intermediate altitudes, increasingly frequent full depth snowslides can be expected.