Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 10 January 2015

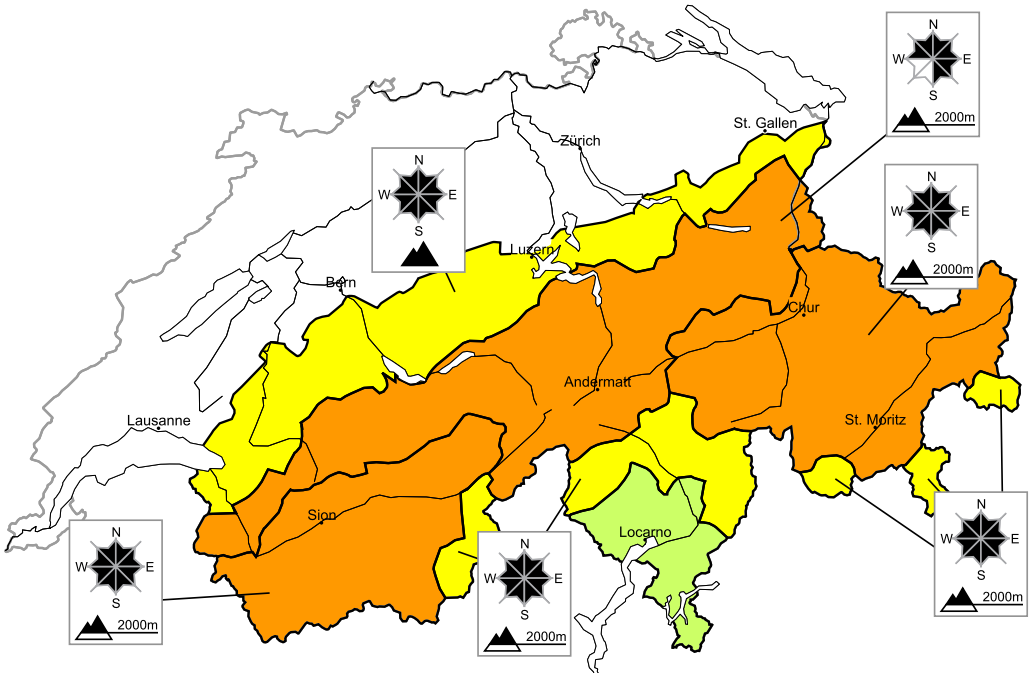
10.1.2015, 07:57

A precarious avalanche situation will be encountered over a wide area. Snow drifts and weakly bonded old snow require caution

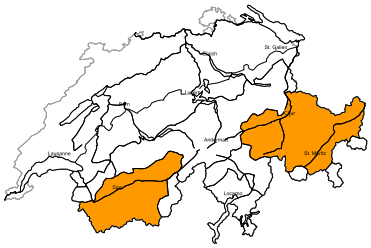
Edition: 10.1.2015, 08:00 / Next update: 10.1.2015, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 10.1.2015, 08:00

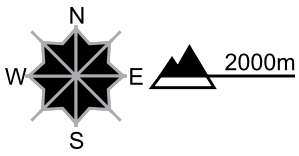


region A — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind avalanche prone snow drift accumulations will form. Avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. They can be released by a single winter sport participant. Remote triggering is possible in isolated cases. Natural avalanches are possible in particular from Prättigau to Lower Engadine. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and great restraint.

Wet avalanches

As a consequence of the rain individual mostly small full-depth and wet avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m.

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

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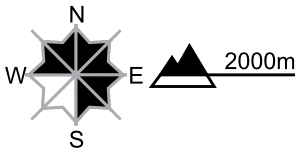
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind the snow drift accumulations will increase in size. The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. In some places avalanches can also penetrate deep layers and reach medium size. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

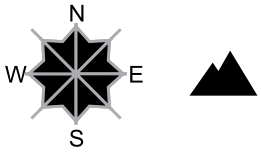
Wet avalanches

As a consequence of the rain more frequent mostly small full-depth and wet avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Wet avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



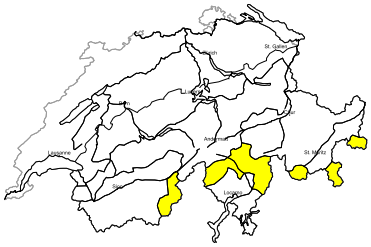
Danger description

As a consequence of the rain more frequent mostly small full-depth and wet avalanches are possible.

Snow drifts

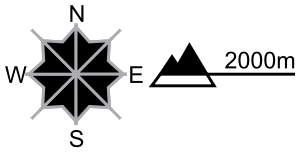
As a consequence of fresh snow and wind further snow drift accumulations will form. These are prone to triggering above approximately 2000 m. Careful route selection is important.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in particular be released in near-surface layers of the snowpack. The fresh and older snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. The prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Careful route selection is recommended.

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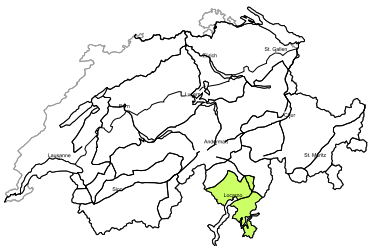
region E

Level 1, low



Snow drifts

More recent snow drift accumulations are mostly only small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in extreme terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 9.1.2015, 17:00

Snowpack

Deeply embedded inside the snow cover at high altitudes (excluding on the southern flank of the Alps) are weak layers of faceted snow crystals which are riddled with crusts. Avalanches can be triggered from these more deeply embedded layers. These conditions are especially prevalent in the indicated regions of the Valais and Grisons. On the southern flank of the Alps, the medium-level and more deeply embedded lowermost layers inside the snowpack are for the most part favourably structured and well consolidated. Older snowdrift accumulations are still prone to triggering in some places.
Throughout Switzerland, below approximately 2000 m in all regions, there is too little snow for this juncture of the season. The strong winds are transporting both new fallen and old snow. The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are expected to swiftly increase in spread and size in northern regions in particular as a result of winds and new fallen snow. The snowdrift accumulations will be distributed and deposited across a highly irregular old snowpack surface and bond inadequately with it. In addition, the heavy burdens on the snow cover will possibly give rise to increasingly frequent fractures down to deeper layers inside the snowpack.
In northern regions the thin snowpack in intermediate altitudes is being softened by the rainfall.

Observed weather on Friday, 9.1.2015

Except in the southermmost regions, skies were overcast. During the course of the day light precipitation set in from the north. The snowfall level was at 1500 to 1800 m.

Fresh snow

By evening on the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in Grisons, there was only a small amount of snowfall above approximately 1800 m.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +1 °C in northern and +5 °C in southern regions

Wind

Strong to storm-velocity westerly to northwesterly winds

Weather forecast through Saturday, 10.1.2015

Friday during the night, precipitation is expected to come to an end. The snowfall level will ascend up to approximately 2400 m. During the day on Saturday it will turn quite sunny.

Fresh snow

Between Friday evening and Saturday morning above approximately 2400 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow are expected:

- Northern Alpine Ridge from eastern Bernese Oberland to Liechtenstein, Praettigau, Lower Engadine north of the Inn: 10 to 30 cm
- Remaining sectors of northern flank of the Alps, northern Grisons and Lower Engadine: 5 to 10 cm of snowfall
- Remaining regions, less. On the southern flank of the Alps it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +4 °C

Wind

Winds will shift from westerly to northwesterly and continue to blow at strong to storm velocity. During the day, winds will slacken off somewhat.

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Outlook through Monday, 12.1.2015

Sunday

On Saturday night, precipitation is expected to set in from the north. The snowfall level will drop from approximately 2000 m down to low lying areas by morning. The snowfall will be more intense during the morning hours, then slacken off during the afternoon. On the northern flank of the Alps in the Valais and in Grisons, 10 to 30 cm of new fallen snow is anticipated. In the furthermost southern regions it will be quite sunny. The northwesterly winds will slacken off somewhat for a brief interim, subsequently during the course of the day intensify once again to strong-to-storm strength. The avalanche danger is expected to increase in northern regions more than anywhere else.

Monday

As a result of ongoing westerly to northwesterly winds it is expected to be rather sunny. The avalanche situation is not expected to change significantly.