Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 22 February 2015

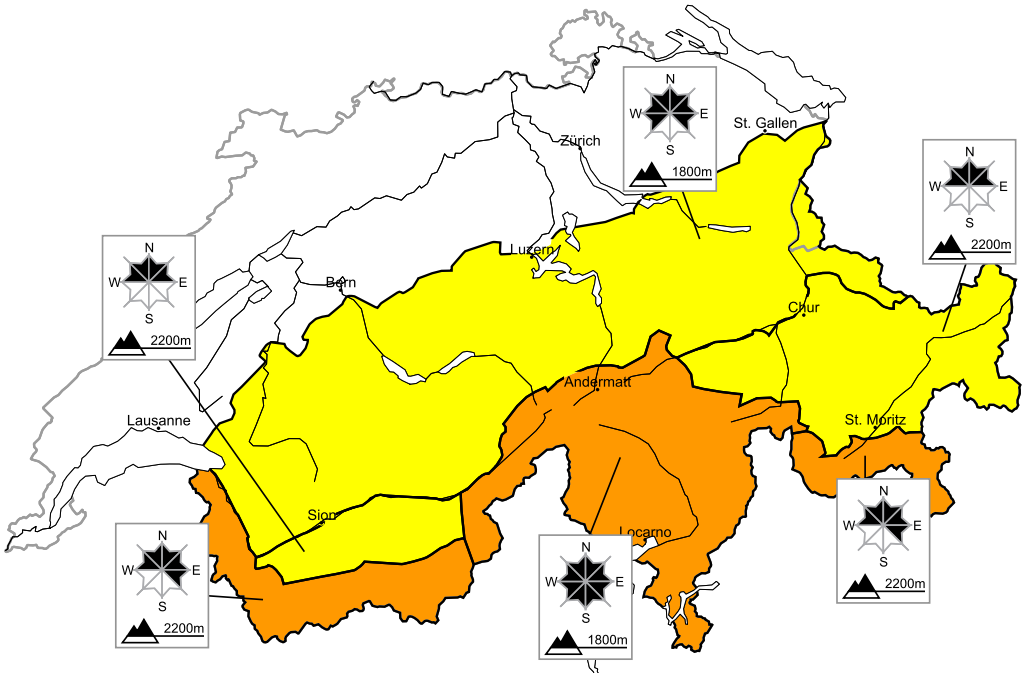
22.2.2015, 07:51

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 22.2.2015, 08:00 / Next update: 22.2.2015, 17:00

Avalanche danger

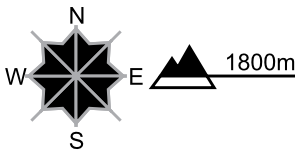
updated on 22.2.2015, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant and reach medium size. Natural avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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

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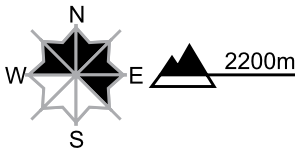
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

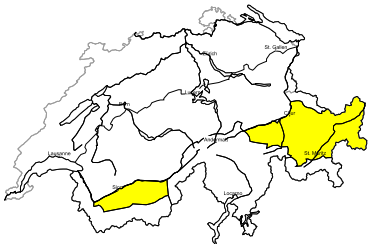
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

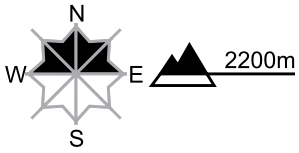
The snow drift accumulations of Saturday are covered with fresh snow and therefore difficult to recognise. They are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant.
Western part of the main Alpine ridge: Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

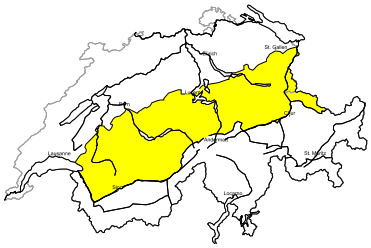
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

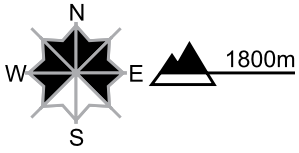
In some places avalanches can penetrate even deep layers and reach medium size in isolated cases. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in little used backcountry terrain. The avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable.
In particular adjacent to the ridge line mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

On Saturday mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. These places are covered with fresh snow and therefore difficult to recognise. The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. Careful route selection is important.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 21.2.2015, 17:00

Snowpack

Strong velocity southerly winds have transported old snow in some places, particularly at high altitudes and in the typically foehn-exposed regions on the northern flank of the Alps. However, only small-sized snowdrift accumulations were formed. In the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps where the heaviest snowfall has been registered, winds tended to be light or non-existent and only very small amounts of snowdrift masses accumulated.
Both fresh fallen snow and freshly formed snowdrift accumulations have been deposited on top of a loosely packed old snow cover surface over widespread areas, or atop surface hoar. All of this new fallen or redistributed snow is prone to triggering.
Most of all in southern Valais and in the inneralpine regions of Grisons, noticeably weak layers are evident, embedded deep down inside the snowpack. Particularly in these regions, avalanches can fracture at lower levels inside the snowpack and release. On the northern flank of the Alps, the structuring of the snow cover is more favourable. On the southern flank of the Alps the overall snow structure beneath the masses of new fallen snow is firm by and large, and favourably layered.

Observed weather on Saturday, 21.2.2015

In northern and in eastern regions, bright intervals made occasional appearances until well into the afternoon. In other regions skies were for the most part overcast. On the southern flank of the Alps and in the Jura, snowfall set in already during the morning hours. In the course of the afternoon, the onset of precipitation was registered in western regions as well. The snowfall extended down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

- Western parts of Jura and Chablais, southern Simplon region, northern and central Ticino, Val Calanca, Val Moesa, Main Alpine Ridge from Vals into the Bernina: 15 to 30 cm
- Remaining parts of the Valais section of Main Alpine Ridge and Sotto Ceneri: approximately 5 cm

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -7 °C in western and southern regions and -4 °C in eastern regions

Wind

- Strong southerly winds were blowing over widespread areas. In the regions typically exposed to foehn, storm velocity winds reached down to intermediate and low altitudes. In other regions, winds were felt above approximately 2500 m more than anywhere else.
- In the Jura, strong velocity southwesterly winds were blowing during the night, slackening off during the day.
- In central Ticino and in Sotto Ceneri, winds were predominantly light.

Weather forecast through Sunday, 22.2.2015

During the night skies will be overcast. Snowfall which will extend down to low lying areas is anticipated over widespread regions. In the morning the final snowfall will come to an end in northeastern regions. During the course of the day, skies are expected to clear up from the west. In southern regions conditions will turn sunny as a result of northerly winds.

Fresh snow

- From Saas Fee over the southern Simplon region into southern Goms, as well as in the valleys of Maggia: 15 to 30 cm
- Remaining regions: 5 to 15 cm widespread

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -8 °C in northern regions and -4 °C in southern regions

Wind

The foehn winds are expected to collapse during the course of the night. During the day, light to moderate strength winds will be blowing from northeasterly directions.

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Outlook through Tuesday, 24.2.2015

Monday

In the early morning hours it will still be sunny. Subsequently, cloud cover will swiftly move in from the west and snowfall is expected to set in. In western regions, as much as 20 cm is anticipated; in northern regions, approximately 10 cm of fresh fallen snow is possible. In northern regions, strong velocity southwesterly to westerly winds are expected to arise. Temperatures will increase. The avalanche danger will incrementally diminish in southern regions. In northern regions, danger levels will increase somewhat, depending on wind direction and strength, and the amount of new fallen snow.

Tuesday

In northern regions skies will be overcast for the most part, accompanied by snow showers. In southern regions bright spells are anticipated. The avalanche danger could well increase slightly in northern regions. In southern regions, danger levels will tend to diminish.