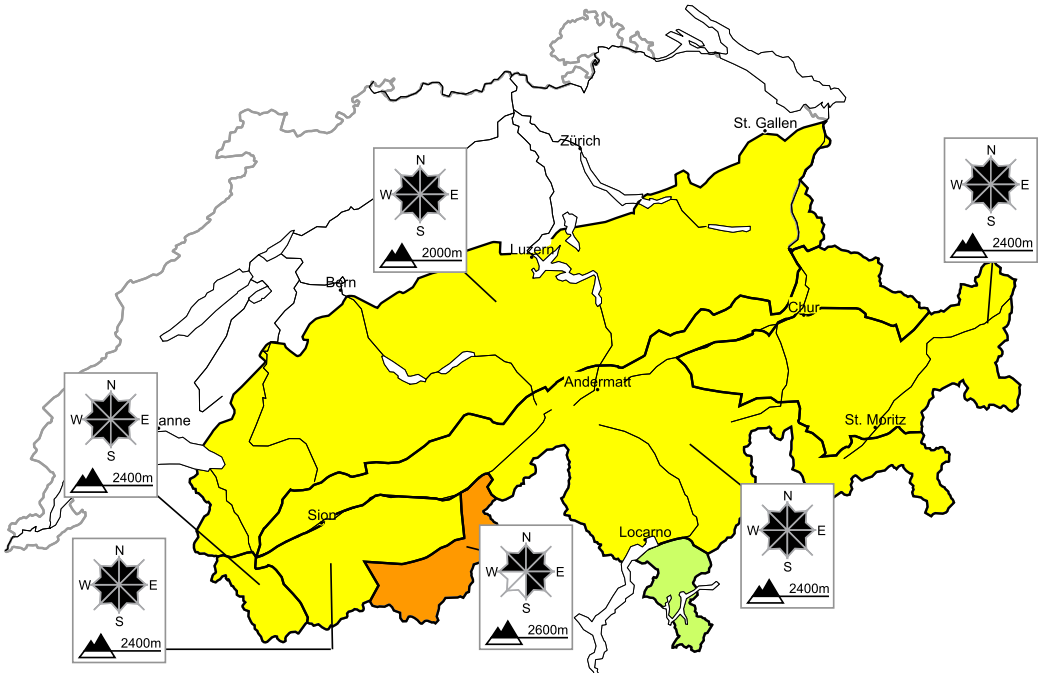
Increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of the storm force wind

Edition: 29.3.2015, 08:00 / Next update: 29.3.2015, 17:00

Avalanche danger

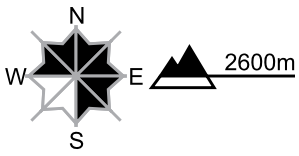
updated on 29.3.2015, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



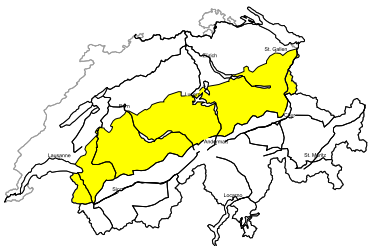
Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations are in some cases still prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations are covered with fresh snow barely recognisable. As a consequence of the stormy weather further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can penetrate deep layers. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

Wet avalanches

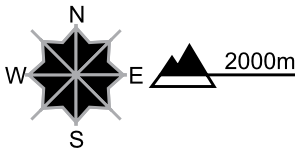
Individual mostly small moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region B — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



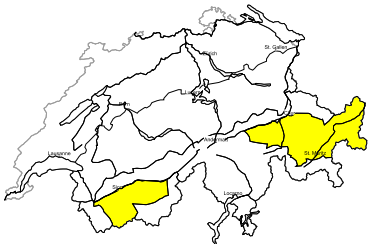
Danger description

Somewhat older snow drift accumulations are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations are covered with fresh snow barely recognisable. As a consequence of the stormy weather further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. The avalanche danger will increase during the day. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Wet avalanches

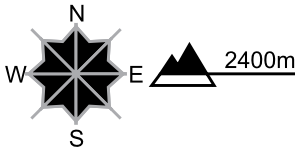
Individual mostly small moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



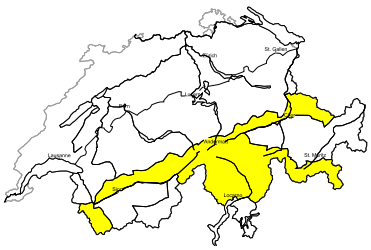
Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations are in some cases still prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations are covered with fresh snow barely recognisable. As a consequence of the stormy weather further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. The avalanche danger will increase during the day.
Avalanches can additionally in isolated cases be released in the weakly bonded old snow, mostly by large additional loads. This applies especially on extremely steep north facing slopes.
Careful route selection is advisable.

Wet avalanches

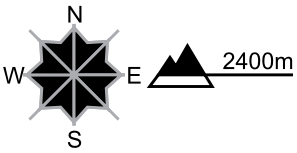
Individual mostly small moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



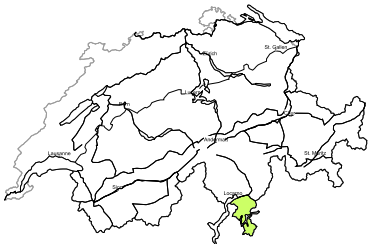
Danger description

Somewhat older snow drift accumulations are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations are covered with fresh snow barely recognisable. As a consequence of the stormy weather further snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. The avalanche danger will increase during the day. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Wet avalanches

Individual mostly small moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region E — Level 1, low



Snow drifts

Somewhat older snow drift accumulations are small but in some cases prone to triggering. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

Wet avalanches

Individual mostly small moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

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

Snowpack and weather

updated on 28.3.2015, 17:00

Snowpack

Snowdrift accumulations which formed further back in the season are in some places still prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations frequently get blanketed by fresh fallen snow, which makes it difficult to recognize the drifts. In addition, on Sunday new and further snowdrift accumulations are expected to form during the course of the day as a result of the storm velocity winds. These drifted masses can easily be triggered, even by the weight of one sole skier.
Embedded deeper down inside the snowpack, particularly in southern Valais, in the inneralpine regions of Grisons and in Val Müstair, weakened layers of snow consisting of faceted snow crystals are prevalent. In the regions indicated, avalanches can be triggered in these buried layers of the old snowpack from place to place, on very steep north facing slopes more than anywhere else. In the remaining regions the snow cover is for the most part well consolidated.
The old snow cover is thoroughly wet up to approximately 2800 m on south facing slopes. Below approximately 2300 m on west and east facing slopes, the extent of general snowpack wetness is increasing.

Observed weather on Saturday, 28.3.2015

Skies in western and southern regions were clear during the night. In eastern regions skies were partly overcast. During the day it was sunny everywhere in the Swiss Alps to start with. In the afternoon, cloud cover rapidly moved in from the northwest.

Fresh snow

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Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +3 °C in western and southern regions and -2 °C in the furthermost eastern regions.

Wind

Winds were blowing at moderate to strong velocity from northerly directions.

Weather forecast through Sunday, 29.3.2015

During the night in northern regions, skies will for the most part be heavily overcast and above approximately 1400 m a small amount of snowfall is anticipated. In southern regions skies will be partially clear. It is expected to remain predominantly dry. During the day skies will become heavily overcast, but at least to start with it will remain dry. During the afternoon, precipitation will then set in from the northwest. The snowfall level will be at 1600 m.

Fresh snow

Between Saturday evening and Sunday evening above approximately 1800 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow are anticipated:

- Northern flank of the Alps, Valais, northern and central Grisons: 5 to 10 cm; in the eastern sector of the northern flank of the Alps, maxiumum 15 cm
- Elsewhere, less snowfall; in southern regions it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -1 °C in northern regions and +2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

To begin with, the westerly winds will be blowing at moderate velocity. Subsequently, winds on the northern flank of the Alps will intensify over the course of the day, reaching strong to storm velocity; in the remaining regions prevailing winds will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity.

Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 29 March 2015

Outlook through Tuesday, 31.3.2015

On Monday snowfall is anticipated everywhere in the Swiss Alps except in the furthermost southern regions. In the Valais, on the northern flank of the Alps, as well as in northern Grisons, the amounts of fresh fallen snow will be significant. Furthermore, a strong to storm-strength northwesterly wind will be blowing. On Tuesday morning, the precipitation will incrementally slacken off. During the afternoon in southern regions, bright intervals are expected. The storm-strength winds will persist. The snowfall level will fluctuate between 1200 and 1800 m, then on Monday night in western regions, ascend towards 2400 m. On Monday the danger of dry avalanches is expected to increase significantly in those regions which have had the heaviest snowfall. In addition, as a result of the higher-altitude snowfall level, increasingly frequent wet-snow avalanches can be expected, more than anywhere else on north facing slopes below approximately 2200 m.