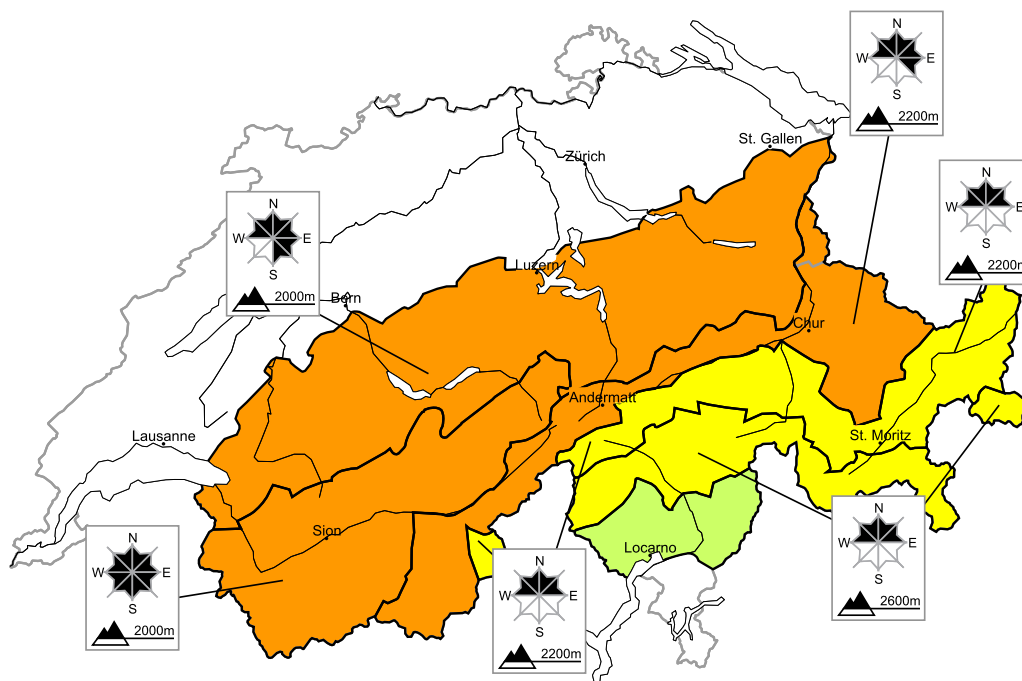


# Increase in avalanche danger in the north and in the west

Edition: 7.1.2016, 08:00 / Next update: 7.1.2016, 17:00

## Avalanche danger

updated on 7.1.2016, 08:00



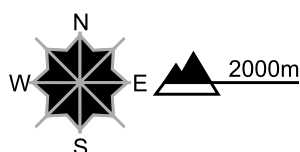
region A

Level 3, considerable



### Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

#### Avalanche prone locations



#### Danger description

As the day progresses as a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind there will be a significant increase in the avalanche danger. Avalanches can penetrate down to the ground and reach dangerously large size. Whumpfung sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack serve as an alarm indicating the danger. Remote triggering is possible. In the afternoon natural avalanches must be expected with increasing likelihood. The danger level 4 (high) will be reached in the afternoon probably. Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for great caution and restraint.

Extreme west of Lower Valais: Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

Other regions: Avalanches capable of reaching the valley bottom are not to be expected.

### Wet avalanches

As the snowfall level rises moist snow slides are to be expected below approximately 1600 m.

Danger levels

1 low

2 moderate

3 consider.

4 high

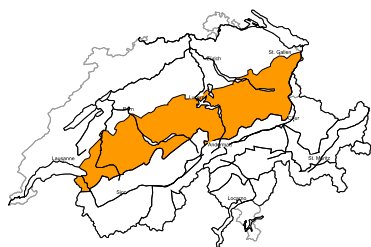
5 very high



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

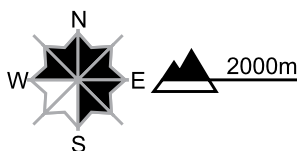
**region B**

**Level 3, considerable**



**Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow**

**Avalanche prone locations**



**Danger description**

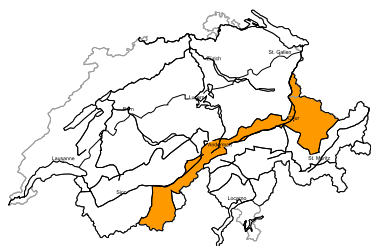
As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind easily released snow drift accumulations will form. The fresh and older snow drift accumulations are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on shady slopes above approximately 2200 m. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. Whumpfung sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

**Wet avalanches**

As the snowfall level rises moist snow slides are to be expected below approximately 1600 m.

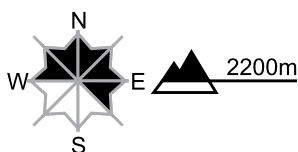
**region C**

**Level 3, considerable**



**Old snow, snow drifts**

**Avalanche prone locations**

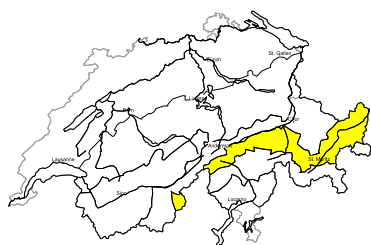


**Danger description**

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind easily released snow drift accumulations will form. Avalanches can additionally be released in the weakly bonded old snow, even by a single winter sport participant. Remote triggering is possible. Whumpfung sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack serve as an alarm indicating the danger. Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

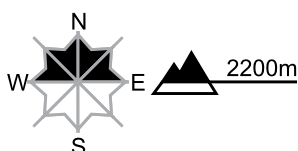
**region D**

**Level 2, moderate**



**Old snow, snow drifts**

**Avalanche prone locations**

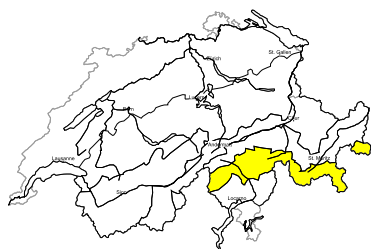


**Danger description**

Snow drift accumulations are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on shady slopes at elevated altitudes. Whumpfung sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Avalanches can in some places be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. Caution is to be exercised in particular on very steep north facing slopes as well as in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. 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.

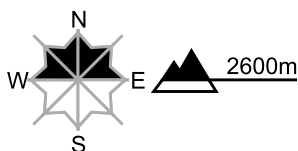
region E

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations

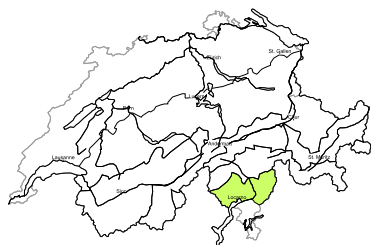


Danger description

Only a little snow is lying. Fresh and older snow drift accumulations are rather small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack on shady slopes at elevated altitudes. The snow drift accumulations 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.

region F

Level 1, low



Favourable situation

Hardly any snow is lying. 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 6.1.2016, 17:00

### Snowpack

Both the new fallen and newly drifted snow from the week of the New Year were deposited to some extent on top of a heavily faceted and loosely-packed snow cover surface blanketed with surface hoar over widespread areas at high altitudes and in high alpine regions. For that reason, these layers of the snowpack were able to bond with more deeply embedded layers inside the old snow cover only extremely inadequately. Avalanches can fracture in this weak interim layer, more than anywhere else in the western sector of the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in Grisons. As a result of the current series of snowfall which has already initiated and the westerly winds which are strengthening to an increasing degree, snowdrift accumulations which are prone to triggering are already forming. Particularly in eastern regions, these drifted masses are being deposited on top of surface hoar in some places.

### Observed weather on Wednesday, 6.1.2016

In western regions it was sunny during the morning; in the afternoon skies were overcast accompanied by light flurries. In eastern and in southern regions, following a night of clear skies, it remained quite sunny and dry until afternoon.

#### Fresh snow

-

#### Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -6 °C in northern regions and -3 °C in southern regions.

#### Wind

Predominantly light westerly to southwesterly winds, in the Prealps blowing intermittently at moderate strength.

### Weather forecast through Thursday, 7.1.2016

On Thursday morning in the western regions, snowfall is expected to set in, accompanied by strong velocity winds. During the afternoon, snowfall is anticipated on the northern flank of the Alps and in Valais which during certain spells will be heavy. In Grisons and above all else on the southern flank of the Alps, only a small amount of snowfall is anticipated, or it will remain dry. The snowfall level is expected to ascend from approximately 700 m in the early morning hours to altitudes approaching 1500 m during the afternoon.

#### Fresh snow

By later in the afternoon above 2000 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow are expected:

- Lower Valais, northern sector of Alpine Ridge from Chablais to the Grimsel, 20 to 40 cm
- remaining sectors of northern flank of the Alps, 15 to 30 cm
- southern Upper Valais, northern Grisons and Samnaun, as well as northern Ticino, 5 to 15 cm
- elsewhere, only a few centimeters, or it will remain dry.

#### Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -1 °C in northwestern regions and - 5 °C in Grisons and in southern regions.

#### Wind

During the night, westerly winds blowing at light to moderate strength.

During the day in the north and in high alpine regions, westerly winds blowing at strong velocity, intermittently reaching storm strength.

### Outlook through Saturday, 9.1.2016

On Thursday night, the snowfall is expected to come to an end. On Friday and Saturday, conditions will remain variable. Intermittent snowfall in northern and western regions is anticipated above 1200 m. In southern regions it is expected to remain dry, for the most part, and partially sunny. The avalanche danger may will increase somewhat on Thursday evening. In outlying terrain away from the secured ski runs, conditions remain treacherous in northern and western regions. In eastern and southern regions, the avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly.