Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 13 February 2016

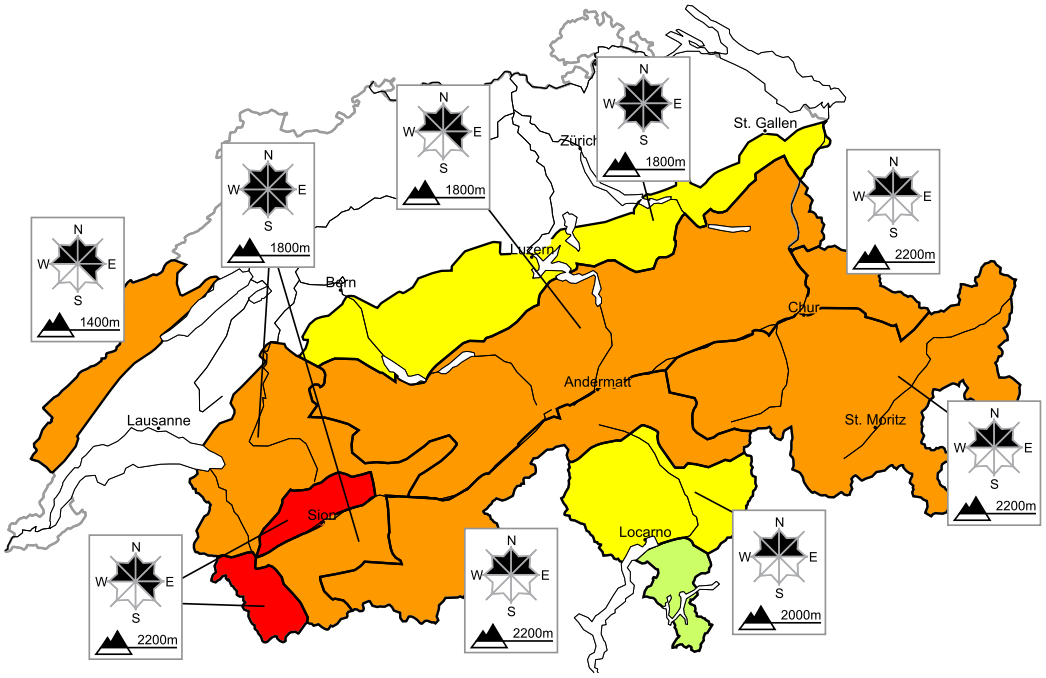
13.2.2016, 08:11

In the west a critical avalanche situation will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 13.2.2016, 08:00 / Next update: 13.2.2016, 17:00

Avalanche danger

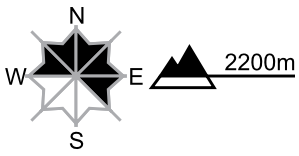
updated on 13.2.2016, 08:00



region A — Level 4, high

Fresh snow and snow drifts

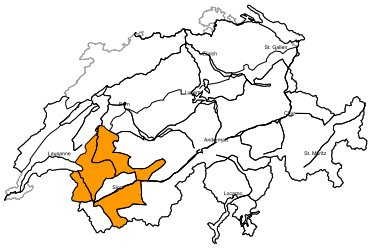
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

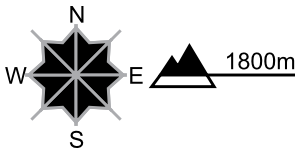
More snow than expected has fallen. The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations can be released easily. Medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large natural avalanches are to be expected, this applies in particular in the afternoon. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered. Great caution and restraint are required.

region B — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations can be released easily, or, in isolated cases naturally. Medium-sized avalanches are to be expected. Extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and great restraint are required.

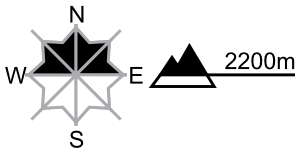
Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

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

region C — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



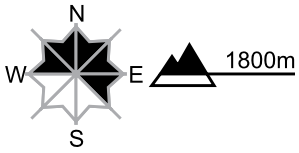
Danger description

Avalanches can be released in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially in shady places that are protected from the wind and at transitions into gullies and bowls. In little used backcountry terrain avalanche prone locations are more prevalent. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Remote triggering is possible. In addition, mostly small snow drift accumulations will form.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

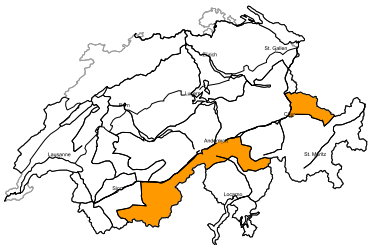
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

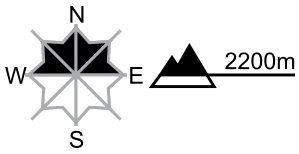
As a consequence of fresh snow and wind easily released snow drift accumulations will form. These are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Even single snow sport participants can release avalanches. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region E — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

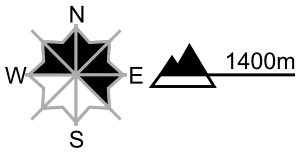
In particular at elevated altitudes easily released snow drift accumulations will form. These are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain.
Additionally in some places avalanches can penetrate near-ground layers of the snowpack and reach dangerously large size. Caution is to be exercised in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack.
Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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

region F — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



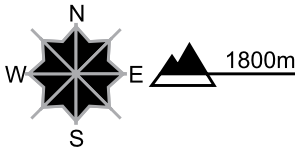
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather precarious snow drift accumulations will form. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Backcountry touring and snowshoe hiking call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region G — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



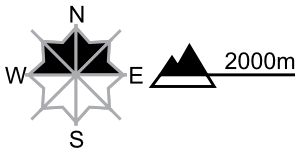
Danger description

The sometimes storm force wind will transport the fresh and old snow. The fresh snow drift accumulations are rather small but prone to triggering. They are to be found in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Caution is to be exercised in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack, when entering gullies and bowls for example. Meticulous route selection is recommended.

region H — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Snow drift accumulations are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be avoided in steep terrain. Careful route selection is recommended.

region I — Level 1, low

Favourable situation

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

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

Snowpack and weather

updated on 12.2.2016, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of snowfall and strong velocity to storm-force winds, snowdrift accumulations which are prone to triggering are forming more than anywhere else in northern and western regions as well as in general at high altitude. In the major areas of precipitation in the west, and in the Lower Valais, these snowdrift accumulations are reaching immense size; in Grisons and in Ticino, they tend to be small-sized.
More deeply embedded or ground-level layers of the snowpack, more than anywhere else on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes above approximately 2200 m, are riddled with faceted snow crystals and are for that reason very weak. In the eastern and southern regions where there has been much less snowfall, avalanches can ongoingly be triggered from this weakened snow fundament and fracture down to these deeply embedded layers. This is particularly the case in central Grisons and in the Engadine. In the western and northern regions where there has been much more snowfall, it is unlikely that avalanches will trigger down to these ground-level layers.

Observed weather on Friday, 12.2.2016

On Thursday night in western and in northern regions, there was a small amount of snowfall. During the day on Friday it was sunny to begin with and in eastern regions it remained sunny until the afternoon. In western and southern regions, clouds moved in during the morning and snowfall set in which extended down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and Friday evening, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered:
· western part of Lower Valais: 15 to 30 cm
· western sector of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of Lower Valais: 5 to 15 cm
· remaining regions, only a few centimeters; in Grisons it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -8 °C.

Wind

On Thursday night winds were southwesterly, blowing at moderate strength. On Friday, winds were southerly, increasing in intensity to moderate-to-strong.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 13.2.2016

For the most part, skies will be overcast. Intermittent snowfall is anticipated, which will be heaviest in the western regions. The snowfall level will be 1000 m. Isolated bright intervals are possible in Grisons and in the Ticino more than anywhere else.

Fresh snow

Between Friday evening and Saturday evening, the following amounts of new fallen snow are expected:
· furthermost western parts of Lower Valais: 30 to 40 cm
· remaining parts of northern sector of Alpine Ridge west of the Reuss; remaining parts of Lower Valais: 15 to 30 cm
· remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps and of the Gotthard region; northern Grisons: 5 to 15 cm
· elsewhere, less.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -4 °C.

Wind

Winds in northern regions and in the Valais will stem from westerly directions, blowing at strong to storm velocity; in Grisons and in Ticino at moderate to strong velocity.

Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 13 February 2016

Outlook through Monday, 15.2.2016

On Sunday skies will be overcast for the most part. Intermittent snowfall is anticipated, more than anywhere else in the western regions. On Monday in eastern regions, skies will frequently be overcast, accompanied by snowfall. In western and southern regions, bright intervals are possible. The avalanche danger is expected to diminish somewhat on Sunday, then bring no significant change on Monday.