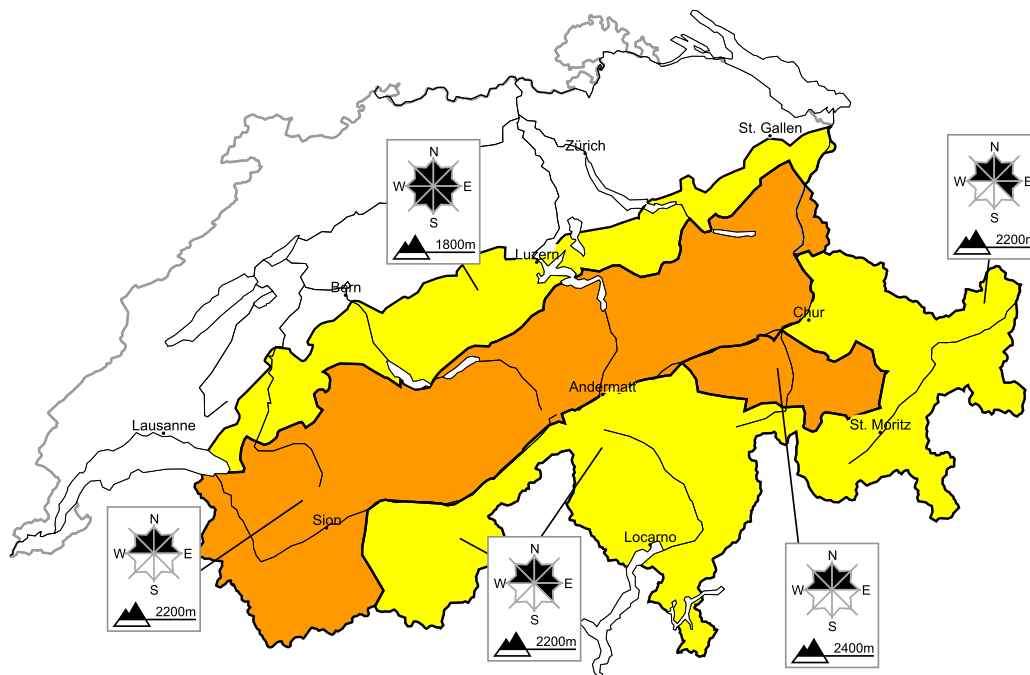


Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 27.2.2016, 08:00 / Next update: 27.2.2016, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 27.2.2016, 08:00



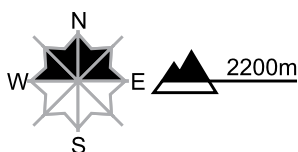
region A

Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The southerly wind will transport the loosely bonded old snow. The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. In particular in the regions exposed to the foehn wind the prevalence and size of the avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger. The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be avoided.

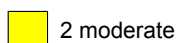
Wet and full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep sunny slopes individual full-depth avalanches and moist snow slides are possible below approximately 2400 m.

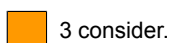
Danger levels



1 low



2 moderate



3 consider.



4 high



5 very high



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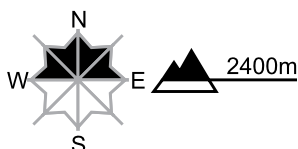
region B

Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



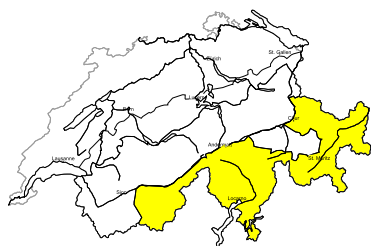
Danger description

Avalanches can be released in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially in 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. Avalanches can in some places be released by a single winter sport participant.

The fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small but to be assessed with care and prudence. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

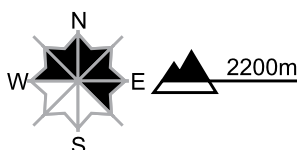
region C

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small but to be assessed with care and prudence. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. At elevated altitudes avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and the danger is greater.

Additionally avalanches can also be released in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are rare. They are to be found in particular on wind-protected shady slopes and at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack. Careful route selection and spacing between individuals are recommended.

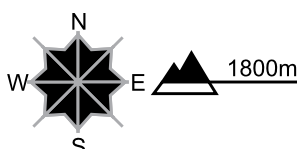
region D

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are mostly small and in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. In particular in the regions exposed to the foehn wind the prevalence and size of the avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection. The snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 26.2.2016, 17:00

Snowpack

The new fallen and newly drifted layers of snow from this week are becoming stable to an increasing degree. More than anywhere else on north and east-facing slopes, they are still prone to triggering in some places. As a result of southerly winds, the loosely-packed snow which blankets the snowpack surface is being whipped up and transported, subsequently deposited (primarily on north-facing slopes) as brittle and trigger-sensitive snowdrift accumulations. Below approximately 2200 m the old snow cover is moist over widespread areas (it is moist under 2500 m on south-facing slopes).

Weakened, unfavourably structured layers more deeply embedded inside the snowpack are found over widespread areas in the southern part of Upper Valais, in Ticino, in the inneralpine regions of Grisons and in the Engadine. In those regions, avalanches can fracture down to the ground-level layers, which are riddled with loosely-packed, faceted snow crystals, and thereby could easily grow to medium size. This danger threatens particularly on north-facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, the snow structure is frequently favourable (not including the most recently deposited layers of snowdrift). Thus, it is unlikely that avalanches will fracture down to these deeply embedded or ground-level layers.

Observed weather on Friday, 26.2.2016

On Thursday night in northern regions, there was a small amount of snowfall down to low lying areas. During the day on Friday in northern regions, and to some extent in the Alpine valleys, there were persistent high fogbanks with their upper borderline at approximately 2000 m. Above that altitude it was quite sunny. During the course of the afternoon, cloudbanks moved in to an increasing extent. In southern regions it was sunny to start with, then during the course of the day skies became increasingly overcast. During the afternoon in the Simplon region and in Ticino, light snowfall set in above approximately 900 m.

Fresh snow

Between Wednesday evening and Friday morning above approximately 2000 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered:

- Prealps, northern flank of the Alps from Chablais into the Glarner Alps, northern part of Valais: 20 to 40 cm; in the furthest western part of Lower Valais as much as 50 cm;
- remaining regions of the northern flank of the Alps, of the Gotthard region and of southern Valais: 10 to 20 cm;
- in other regions, less; or it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -5 °C.

Wind

Winds were southerly, blowing at moderate to strong velocity.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 27.2.2016

On Saturday on the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom, skies will be heavily overcast accompanied by snowfall above approximately 1000 m. In northern regions as a result of the foehn-wind scenario, it will be quite sunny, apart from cloudbanks during the afternoon.

Fresh snow

- southern part of the Simplon region, Ticino: 10 to 20 cm;
- remaining sectors of Main Alpine Ridge not including Val Müstair: 5 to 10 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -2 °C in northern regions and -5 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will be southerly (foehn), blowing at moderate to strong velocity, intensifying during the afternoon.

Outlook through Monday, 29.2.2016

Sunday

On Saturday night, strong velocity southerly winds will be blowing, accompanied by persistent snowfall on the southern flank of the Alps, expected to be most intensive on the Main Alpine Ridge between the Monterosa region and well into the northwestern part of Ticino. In northern regions, skies will still be bright during the morning as a result of the foehn scenario, subsequently there will be a small amount of snowfall over the course of the day. On Saturday night, the avalanche danger is expected to increase significantly in southern regions. On the Main Alpine Ridge from the Zermatt region into the upper valleys of Maggia, the avalanche danger level "high" (level 4) will presumably be reached. In the remaining regions, avalanche danger is also expected to increase somewhat as a result of the freshly-formed snowdrift accumulations.

Monday

On Sunday night, the snowfall is expected to intensify still further in southern regions and in the Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge. During the day on Monday, the snowfall will slacken off in southern regions; in northern regions snowfall is anticipated over widespread areas. The avalanche danger levels will remain at "high" (level 4) in the major areas of precipitation. Danger levels could also increase to "high" (level 4) in the remaining regions of southern Valais. In other regions, the avalanche scenario is not expected to change significantly.