Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 3 March 2016

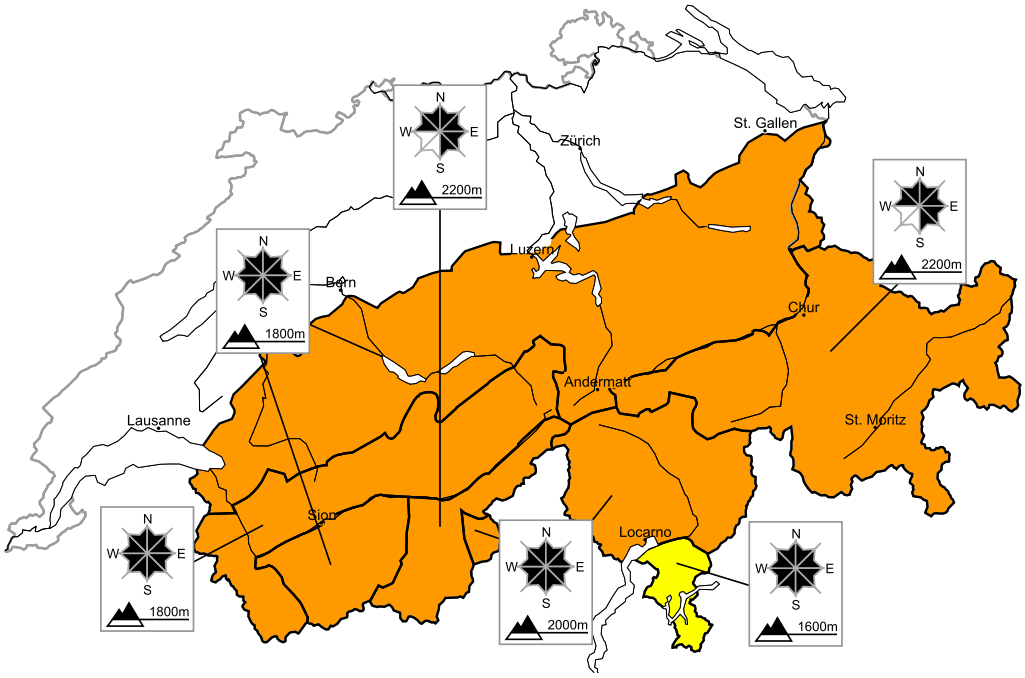
3.3.2016, 07:35

Increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind

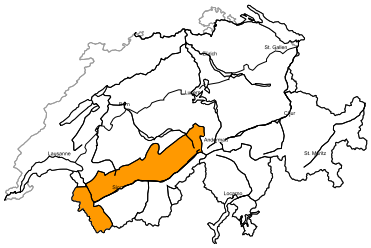
Edition: 3.3.2016, 08:00 / Next update: 3.3.2016, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 3.3.2016, 08:00

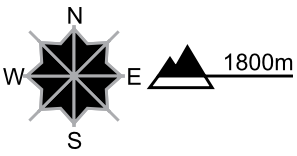


region A — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind extensive snow drift accumulations have formed. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. As the day progresses more frequent natural avalanches are to be expected, including medium-sized ones. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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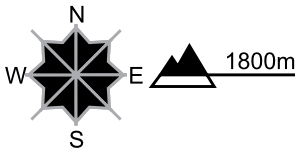
region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

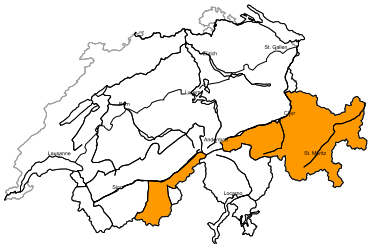
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

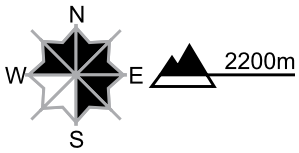
As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind precarious snow drift accumulations have formed. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Natural avalanches are possible, but they will be mostly small. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



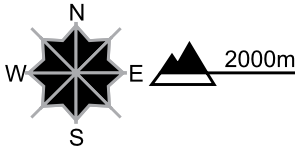
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind avalanche prone snow drift accumulations have formed. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can penetrate deep layers and reach dangerously large size. This applies especially on north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



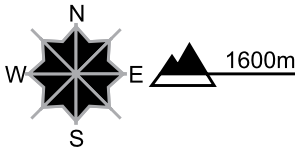
Danger description

As a consequence of the northerly wind snow drift accumulations have formed. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Avalanches can in isolated cases penetrate deep layers and reach dangerously large size. This applies especially on north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The snow drift accumulations of the last few days represent the main danger. They are to be avoided especially in very steep terrain. Careful route selection is recommended.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 2.3.2016, 17:00

Snowpack

As a consequence of fresh fallen snow and strong velocity winds, snowdrift accumulations are in the process of forming in all regions which are extremely prone to triggering. These drifted masses can turn out to be large and wide ranging, particularly on the northern flank of the Alps and in the Lower Valais.
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. Thus, it is unlikely that avalanches will fracture down to these deeply embedded or ground-level layers.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 2.3.2016

In northern regions there was a small amount of snowfall during the night. In the afternoon, snowfall set in once again. The snowfall level ascended to approximately 1400 m. In the inneralpine regions it remained dry and was intermittently sunny. In the furthermost southern regions it was quite sunny.

Fresh snow

By early afternoon the following amounts of fresh fallen snow had been registered:
· northern flank of the Alps, 5 to 10 cm;
· in other regions, less; or it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, 0 °C.

Wind

On the northern flank of the Alps winds were westerly, blowing at moderate strength, intermittently blowing at strong velocity; in other regions winds were blowing at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Thursday, 3.3.2016

During the night intermittent snowfall is expected in all regions. During the day in northern regions skies will be overcast, accompanied by snowfall. In southern regions it will become increasingly sunny and dry. The snowfall level in northern regions will be at low altitudes. In southern regions snowfall is expected above approximately 1000 m.

Fresh snow

· northern flank of the Alps and Lower Valais: 20 to 40 cm; greater amounts from region to region in the eastern Bernese Oberland and in the furthermost western part of Lower Valais;
· Upper Valais, northern and central Grisons, Engadine: 10 to 20 cm;
· southern flank of the Alps: 5 to 10 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -8 °C in northern regions and -5 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds at high altitudes will be blowing at strong velocity, occasionally reaching storm strength, from the northwest.

Outlook through Saturday, 5.3.2016

On Friday in eastern regions, skies will be partly sunny as a consequence of the foehn weather scenario; in other regions skies will be heavily overcast for the most part. During the course of the day in western regions, snowfall is expected to set in. On Saturday, snowfall is expected over widespread areas down to low lying areas. In some areas of southern regions, the snowfall will be heavy.
Avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly on Friday. On Saturday, danger levels are expected to increase in southern regions more than anywhere else.