Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 17 March 2016

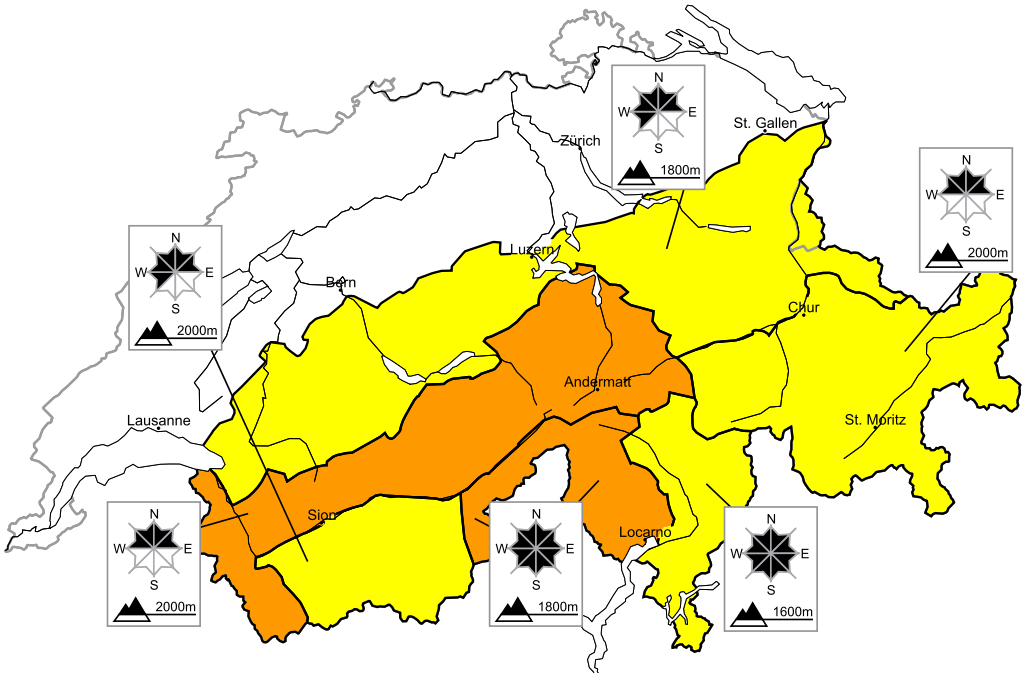
17.3.2016, 07:45

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions. Snow drift accumulations can be released easily

Edition: 17.3.2016, 08:00 / Next update: 17.3.2016, 17:00

Avalanche danger

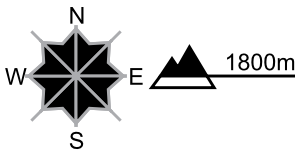
updated on 17.3.2016, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are poorly bonded with the old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes moist snow slides and avalanches are to be expected as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night.

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

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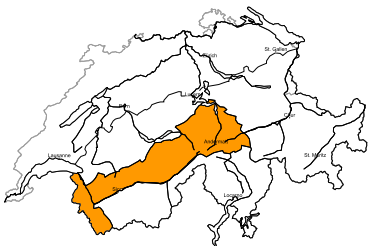
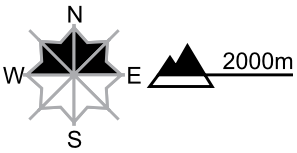
region B — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The snow drift accumulations of Wednesday are poorly bonded with the old snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

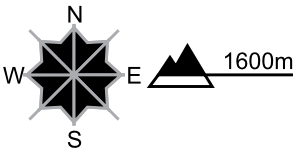
Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes wet avalanches are possible as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. Careful route selection is advisable. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised also in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes moist snow slides are to be expected as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night.

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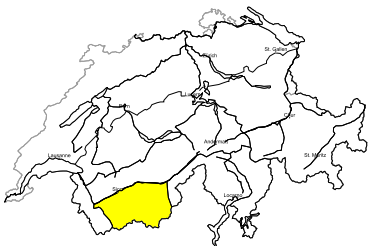
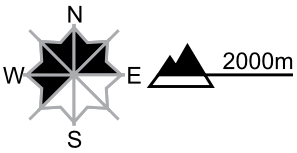
region D — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more widespread and the danger is slightly greater. Careful route selection is advisable. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised also in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

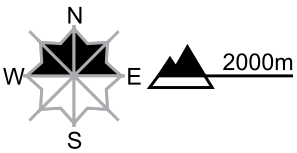
Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes wet avalanches are possible as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more widespread and the danger is slightly greater.
Avalanches can in isolated cases be triggered in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. They are to be found in particular on little used, rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes above approximately 2400 m.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes wet avalanches are possible as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night.

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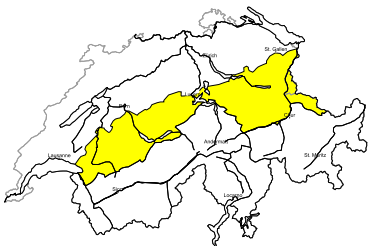
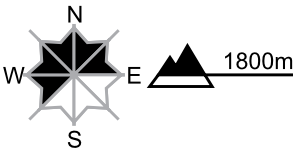
region F

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised also in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.
In regions exposed to the foehn wind and in high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more widespread.

Full-depth avalanches, Wet avalanches as day progresses

In particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes wet avalanches are possible as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation.
On steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are possible. They can be released at any time of day or night.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 16.3.2016, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of strong-velocity southerly winds, fresh snowdrift accumulations have formed on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes more than anywhere else. Particularly on north-facing slopes, these drifted masses were deposited on top of a loosely-packed snowpack surface or on top of surface hoar and for that reason, are quite easily triggered.
The old snow cover is favourably structured over widespread areas. Nevertheless, in southern Upper Valais, in northern Ticino, in the inneralpine regions of Grisons, in the Engadine, and in the southern valleys of Grisons, deeply embedded layers near ground-level of the snowpack are riddled with loosely-packed, faceted snow crystals. In those regions, avalanches can (in very isolated cases) fracture down to these deeply embedded layers, sweep away the entire snowpack and thereby grow to dangerously large size. This scenario particularly threatens on north-facing slopes above approximately 2400 m.
As a consequence of solar radiation and the natural daytime warming process, the snowpack surface tends to soften up, particularly on steep, sunny slopes. During the course of the day, increasingly frequent moist sluffs, snowslides and avalanches can occur. Gliding avalanches are possible at any time of day or night and in isolated cases are even possible on north-facing slopes.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 16.3.2016

During the night, skies were heavily overcast for the most part and there was snowfall down to low lying areas. During the daytime, the snowfall persisted in southern regions; in northern regions, skies were variably cloudy accompanied by bright intervals; in eastern regions, there were a few sunny spells.

Fresh snow

Above approximately 1000 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered between Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon:

- central sector of southern flank of the Alps not including Sotto Ceneri, plus the Simplon region: 15 to 30 cm;
- central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of Main Alpine Ridge, Grisons, Sotto Ceneri: 5 to 10 cm;
- remaining regions of Switzerland: only a few centimeters.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -5 °C in northern regions and -7 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- During the night, winds were easterly to southeasterly, blowing at light to moderate strength.
- During the daytime, winds were southeasterly, blowing at moderate to strong velocity in northern regions; at storm-strength in some places of the northern sector of the Alpine Ridge; and at light to moderate strength in southern regions.

Weather forecast through Thursday, 17.3.2016

On Wednesday night in northern regions, skies will be clear for the most part. In southern regions, a small amount of snowfall is anticipated (the snowfall level will be at 500 m). On Thursday in northern regions, it will be sunny by and large. In the Simplon regions and in Ticino, skies will be overcast to begin with, then it will turn increasingly sunny during the course of the day.

Fresh snow

Main Alpine Ridge from Zermatt to the Nufen Pass, as well as western Ticino: approximately 5 cm; in the Simplon region as much as 10 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -1 °C in northern regions and -3 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will be southerly to southeasterly during the night, blowing at moderate to strong velocity at high altitudes, as well as in the foehn-exposed valleys of northern regions, subsequently tapering off to light strength during the daytime.

Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 17 March 2016

Outlook through Saturday, 19.3.2016

On Friday and on Saturday, it will be sunny and only light-strength winds will prevail. The danger of dry avalanches is expected to diminish. The danger of wet-snow avalanches is expected to increase during the course of each day. Gliding avalanches are possible at any time of day or night.