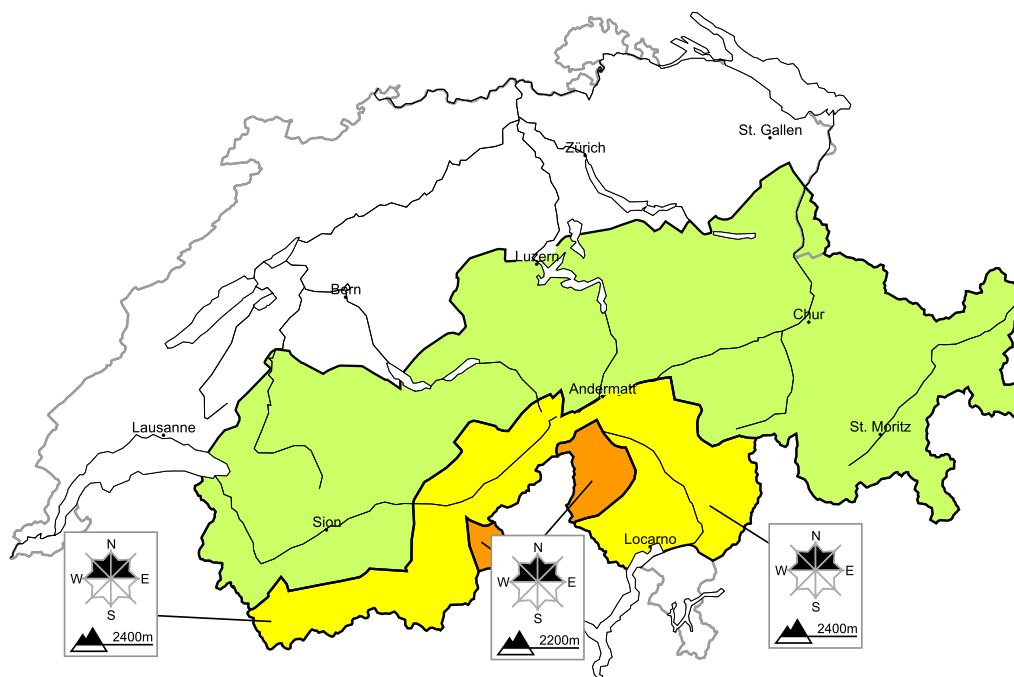


In the south a considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 22.12.2016, 17:00 / Next update: 23.12.2016, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 22.12.2016, 17:00



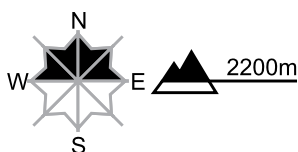
region A

Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

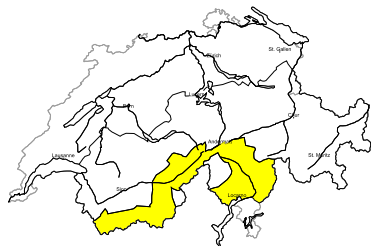
The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on wind-protected shady slopes above approximately 2200 m. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Fresh avalanches and whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger. Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Isolated moist snow slides and avalanches are possible as a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation. This applies especially on steep sunny slopes.

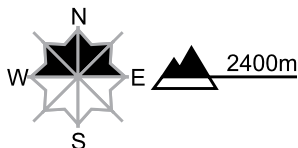
region B

Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



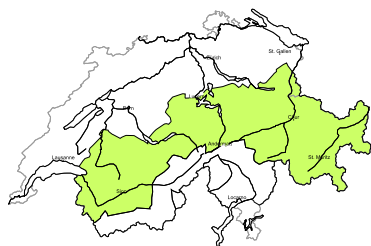
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on wind-protected shady slopes above approximately 2200 m. The snow drift accumulations are rather small but can in some cases be released easily. Whumpfung sounds can indicate the danger. 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. Along the border between Valais and Italy avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and the danger is slightly greater.

In very isolated cases avalanches can be released in near-ground layers. This applies especially on extreme shady slopes above approximately 2800 m.

region C

Level 1, low



Snow drifts

The snow drift accumulations are small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are clearly recognisable to the trained eye. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

The Avalanche Warning Service currently has only a small amount of information that has been collected in the high Alpine regions, so that the avalanche danger should be investigated especially thoroughly in the relevant locality.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 22.12.2016, 17:00

Snowpack

Between Sunday evening and Wednesday in the Simplon region as well as in northwestern Ticino, there was 30 to 50 cm of fresh fallen snow registered. In the remaining sectors of the Valais part of the Main Alpine Ridge, in southern Urseren, in the remaining parts of northern Ticino as well as in central Ticino, there was 15 to 30 cm of new fallen snow recorded. In other regions of Switzerland there was less snowfall or no new fallen snow whatsoever. As a result of southerly winds, fresh snowdrift accumulations were formed, more than anywhere else in the regions where there was snowfall. Particularly on shady, wind-protected slopes between approximately 2200 m and 3000 m, both the fresh fallen snow and the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations were deposited on top of a faceted-crystal old snowpack surface, to some extent also on top of surface hoar.

Furthermore, at the snowpack's lowermost base on smooth, shady slopes above approximately 2800 m, there is still a weak layer of old, faceted-crystal snow from October in all regions of Switzerland. There have been no avalanches unleashed from this weak layer for a longer period of time; however, such triggerings cannot be ruled out.

Observed weather on Thursday, 22.12.2016

Apart from sparse high-altitude clouds, it was sunny.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +4 °C.

Wind

Winds were blowing from southwesterly directions at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Friday, 23.12.2016

During the night skies will be heavily overcast, but it will generally remain dry. During the daytime it will be rather sunny.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +3 °C.

Wind

Winds will be southwesterly, blowing at light to moderate strength.

Outlook through Sunday, 25.12.2016

On Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day in northern regions, skies will be predominantly overcast. A small amount of precipitation is possible, particularly on Christmas Day. The snowfall level will be 1300 to 1800 m. In southern regions it will be partly sunny and remain dry for the most part. Winds at 2000 m will be westerly, at 3000 m northwesterly, blowing at strong to storm strength as of Saturday afternoon. On Sunday in southern regions, the northerly winds will extend down to low lying areas.

In the Valais part of the Main Alpine Ridge, more than anywhere else, as well as in northern and central Ticino, the northwesterly winds on Christmas Eve will give rise to new, delicate snowdrift accumulations forming. These drifts will be the main danger. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, the avalanche situation is not expected to change significantly.