Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 19 January 2017

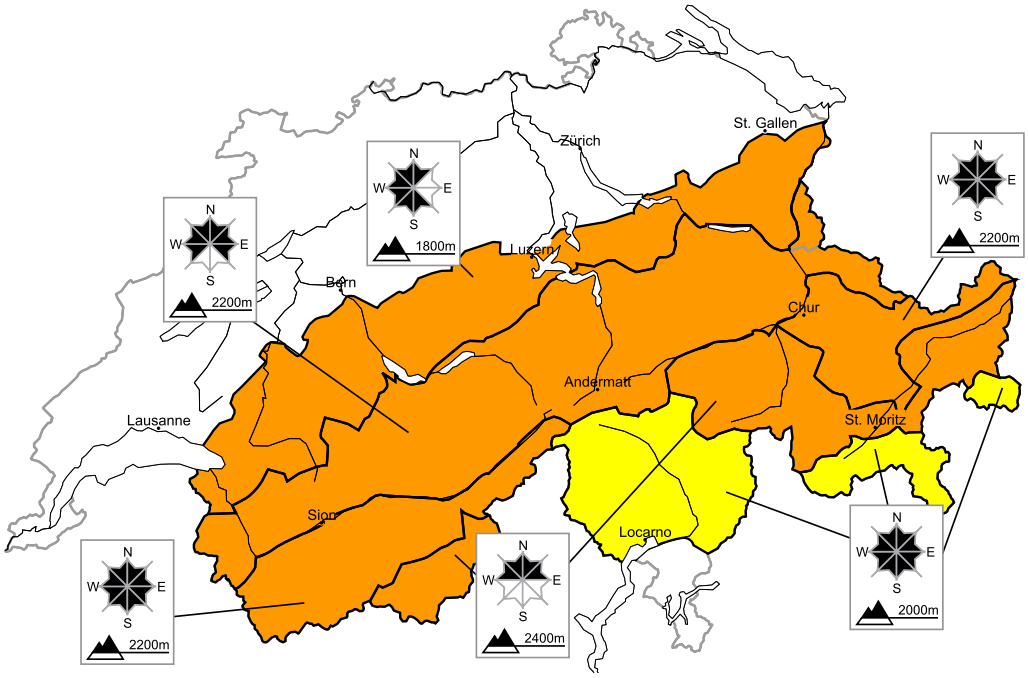
19.1.2017, 07:57

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 19.1.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 19.1.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

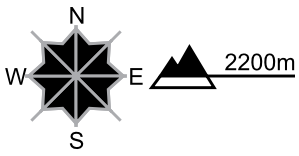
updated on 19.1.2017, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of last week are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In particular on steep shady slopes they can reach dangerously large size. Remote triggering is possible. The avalanche prone locations are difficult to recognise. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Snow drifts

Adjacent to the ridge line clearly visible snow drift accumulations have formed. These are mostly small. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

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

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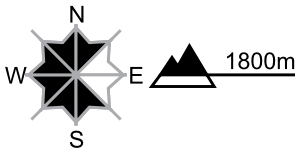
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

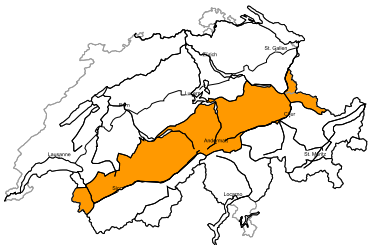
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

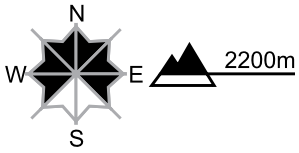
As a consequence of the Bise wind sometimes large snow drift accumulations have formed. These can especially at their margins be released by people. The fresh snow drift accumulations are clearly recognisable to the trained eye. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



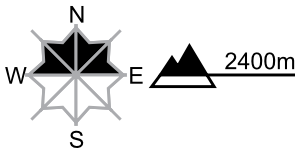
Danger description

Avalanches can in some places be released in the weakly bonded old snow, especially on steep shady slopes above approximately 2200 m. Avalanches can reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are rather rare but barely recognisable. Caution is to be exercised in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow as well as at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack.
Somewhat older snow drift accumulations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas in all aspects. They can especially at their margins be released by people. The snow drift accumulations are clearly recognisable to the trained eye. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.
Northern Alpine ridge from Trient to the Reuss: On north facing slopes mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. These are prone to triggering.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of last week are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack, especially on north facing slopes. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Snow drifts

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are to be found adjacent to the ridge line in all aspects. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

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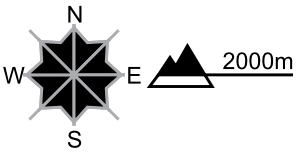
region E

Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are in some cases still prone to triggering. They can be released, especially at their margins,. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. In isolated cases avalanches can penetrate deep layers. This applies in particular on north facing slopes above approximately 2200 m. Careful route selection is recommended.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 18.1.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

The fresh fallen and freshly drifted snow layers of the last week have now consolidated quite well. Wherever those layers are deep, particularly in the regions north of an imaginary Rhine-Rhone line - they can now be triggered only by large additional loading for the most part. In the regions south of an imaginary Rhine-Rhone line, the weakened snowpack layers are shallow, mostly covered with drifts and new fallen snow, and can be triggered more easily, particularly on shady slopes between 2200 and 2800 m, where the old snowpack frequently is utterly transformed to faceted-crystal snow and is thereby weakened. In southern regions there is very little snow.
On Tuesday above all else, the bise winds in northern regions and the northeasterly winds at high altitudes of the southern regions will transport masses of snow. The snowdrift accumulations which are brought about will be deposited to some extent on top of loosely-packed snow and will still be prone to triggering in some places. In southern regions, the transported masses of snow were not as great.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 18.1.2017

In the Prealps there was fog from place to place, extending to an upper altitude of approximately 1500m. Above that altitude and in the remaining regions of Switzerland it was sunny. The bise wind and (in the mountains) easterly winds were not blowing at the same strong velocites as on Tuesday and it was also slightly less cold in the mountains.

Fresh snow

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Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -6 °C.

Wind

The bise wind and, in the mountains, easterly winds were blowing as follows:

- in the Jura region during the night, as well as in the Vaud and Fribourg Alps, at strong velocity, reaching storm-strength from place to place;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, predominantly at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Thursday, 19.1.2017

In the Prealps, high fog prevails extending to an upper altitude of approximately 1500m. Above that altitude and in the remaining regions of Switzerland it will be sunny. In the mountains, temperatures are expected to be somewhat higher.

Fresh snow

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Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -4 °C in northern regions and -7 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- bise and northeasterly winds are expected to slacken off, blowing only at light to moderate strength during the daytime.
- northern Alpine Ridge: in the inner Alpine valleys, a brief bout of foehn wind is anticipated during the night.

Outlook through Saturday, 21.1.2017

On Friday in northeastern regions a few high-altitude cloudbanks will tenaciously persist. In other regions of the Swiss mountains it will be sunny on both days. On Saturday as a result of southerly winds, small-sized snowdrift accumulations are expected to form. Apart from that, the avalanche danger is expected to decrease. In southern Valais and in the Grisons, the avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly, due to poor snow cover structuring.