Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 20 January 2017

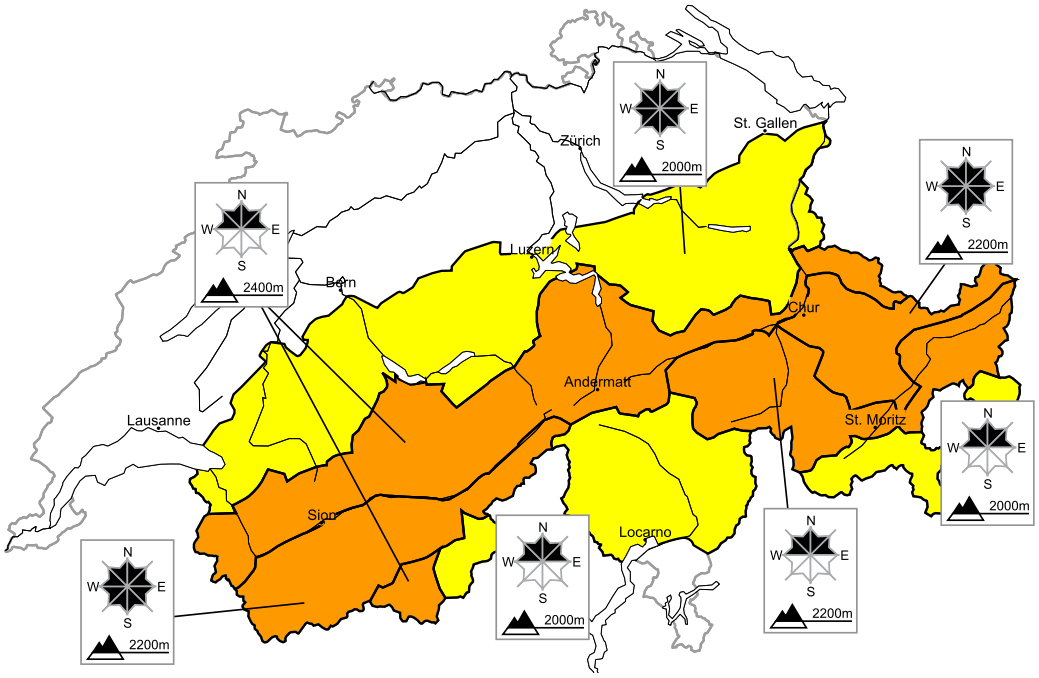
20.1.2017, 08:06

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 20.1.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 20.1.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

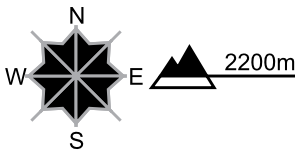
updated on 20.1.2017, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Distinct weak layers in the old snowpack necessitate caution. 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 restraint.

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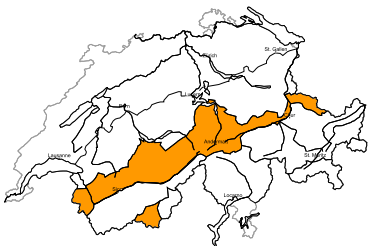
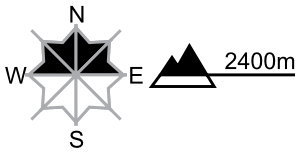
region B — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Faceted weak layers exist in the bottom section of the snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can reach medium size. The 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, when entering gullies and bowls for example.

The older snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released by people.
Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

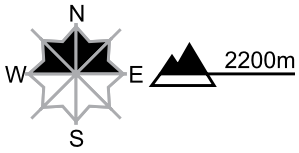
Full-depth avalanches

On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are to be expected, but they will be mostly small.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Distinct weak layers in the old snowpack necessitate caution. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. 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.

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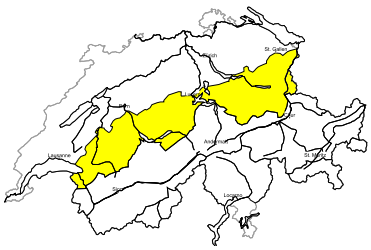
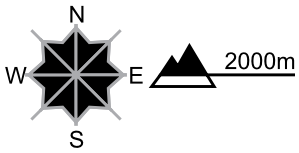
region D — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released, mostly by large loads.
Faceted weak layers exist in the bottom section of the snowpack in particular on shady slopes. 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, when entering gullies and bowls for example.
Careful route selection and spacing between individuals are recommended.

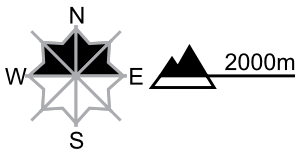
Full-depth avalanches

On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are to be expected, but they will be mostly small.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations can be released, especially at their margins,. 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, when entering gullies and bowls for example. 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.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 19.1.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

The old snow cover contains weak layers in many regions and areas. Most pronounced are those on shady slopes at altitudes between 2200 and 2800 m as well as in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons. In the regions north of an imaginary Rhine-Rhone line where snowfall has been heaviest, the weak layers are frequently blanketed over by deep new layers, thus making them triggerable only in isolated cases. This is particularly the case in places where the snow cover is relatively shallow. In the southern Valais and in Grisons, the weaker layers tend to lie closer to the uppermost snow surface, which in turn makes avalanches more likely to be triggered. In those regions, even remote triggerings over large distances have been reported over the last few days.
In northern Ticino the snowpack structure is more favourable. In Sotto Ceneri and in the southern valleys of Grisons there is only a small amount of snow.

Observed weather on Thursday, 19.1.2017

Along the Prealps there has been fog from region to region extending to an upper border of 1200 to 1500 m. Above that altitude and in the other regions of Switzerland, it was sunny.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -3 °C in northern regions and -5 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- Winds during the night on the northern Alpine Ridge from Chablais as far as the Reuss were southeasterly, blowing for the most part a strong velocity.
- Otherwise winds were blowing from easterly directions at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Friday, 20.1.2017

In the mountains it is expected to be sunny by and large.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -3 °C in northern regions and -5 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will be easterly to southeasterly, blowing at light strength for the most part.

Outlook through Sunday, 22.1.2017

On Saturday it will be sunny. On Sunday, high altitude cloudbanks are expected to move in from the south during the course of the day, most of all in southern Valais. Winds will be blowing from southerly directions. On Sunday, the southerly winds could lead to the loosely-packed old snow being transported. Otherwise, avalanche danger levels are expected to incrementally decrease over widespread areas. Conditions will continue to remain delicate in southern Valais and in Grisons, due to the poor snow layering.