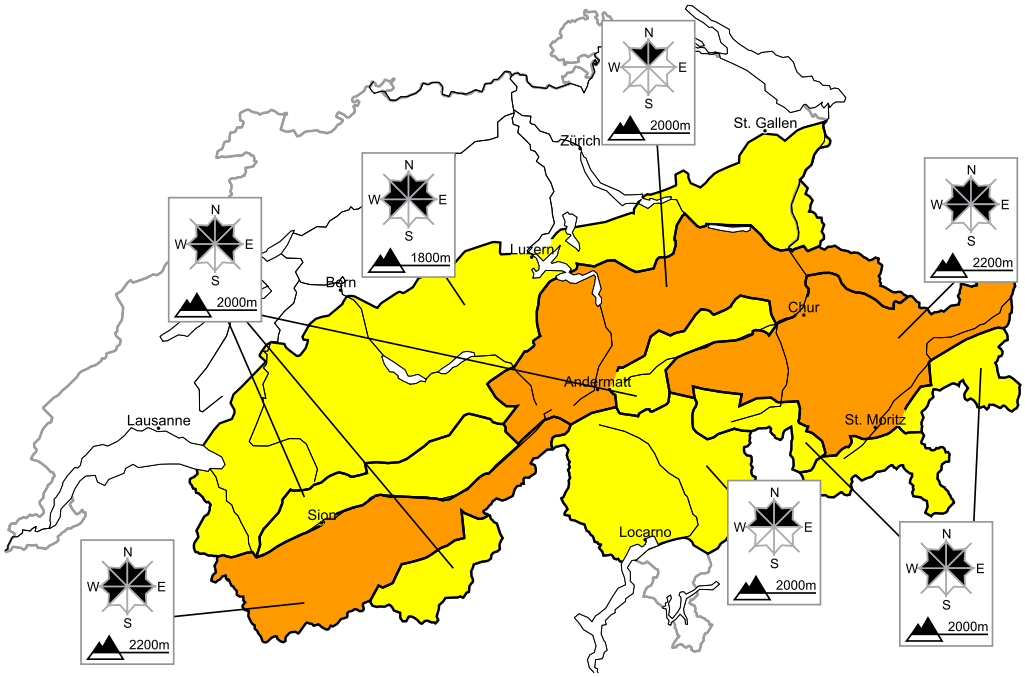
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 22.1.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 22.1.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

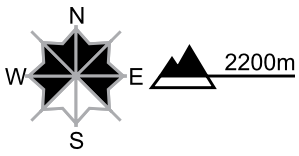
updated on 22.1.2017, 08:00



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. This applies especially in little used backcountry terrain. In particular on steep shady slopes avalanches 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.

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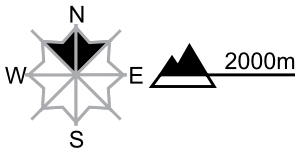
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



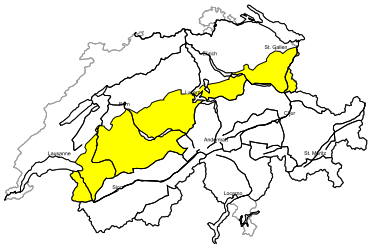
Danger description

As a consequence of the southerly wind clearly visible snow drift accumulations have formed. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases.
Faceted weak layers exist in the bottom section of the snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can in some cases be triggered in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large 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, when entering gullies and bowls for example. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

Full-depth avalanches

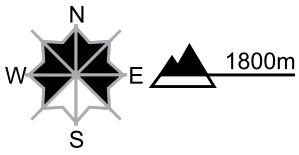
On steep grassy slopes individual full-depth avalanches are to be expected, but they will be mostly small.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in some places be released in the weakly bonded old snow in particular on shady slopes. They can in isolated cases reach dangerously large 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. Careful route selection and spacing between individuals are recommended.
The mostly small snow drift accumulations of the last few days can be released by a single winter sport participant in some cases. They are to be avoided in steep terrain.

Full-depth avalanches

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

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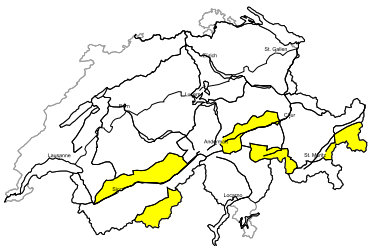
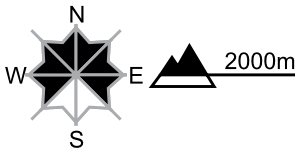
region D — Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



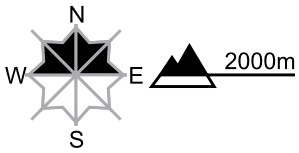
Danger description

Avalanches can in some places be released in the weakly bonded old snow in particular on shady slopes. They can in isolated cases reach dangerously large 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. Careful route selection and spacing between individuals are recommended.
Fresh snow drift accumulations are small and to be assessed with care and prudence.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in some places be released, mostly by large loads. 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 21.1.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southerly winds, predominantly small-sized snowdrift accumulations which, however, are prone to triggering, are being formed on the northern Alpine Ridge more than anywhere else.
In addition, the old snow cover is riddled with weakened layers in many places. These are most striking, and most threatening, on shady slopes between altitudes of 2000m and 2800m, 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 weakened layers are frequently blanketed over by deep newer layers and thus, tend to be triggerable only in isolated cases. This applies in particular to places where the snowpack tends to be more shallow. In the southern Valais and in Grisons, the weakened layers are found closer to the uppermost surface, which makes avalanches more likely to trigger. In these regions, additional remote triggerings have been registered over the last few days.
In northern Ticino, the snowpack structuring is more favourable. In Sotto Ceneri and in the southern valleys of Grisons, there is only a small amount of snow.

Observed weather on Saturday, 21.1.2017

It was sunny in the mountains.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

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

Wind

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

Weather forecast through Sunday, 22.1.2017

It is expected to be sunny in the mountains, accompanied by intermittent cloudbanks at high altitudes in the Valais and in Ticino more than anywhere else.

Fresh snow

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Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, 0 °C in northern regions and -3 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds on the northern Alpine Ridge will be blowing at moderate strength, in the other regions of Switzerland at light to moderate velocity from southerly directions.

Outlook through Tuesday, 24.1.2017

On both days it will be sunny for the most part in the mountains. In northern regions, the upper borderline of the high fog will ascend in altitude, on Monday to 1200m, on Tuesday to 1500m. The avalanche danger is expected to decrease only very gradually.