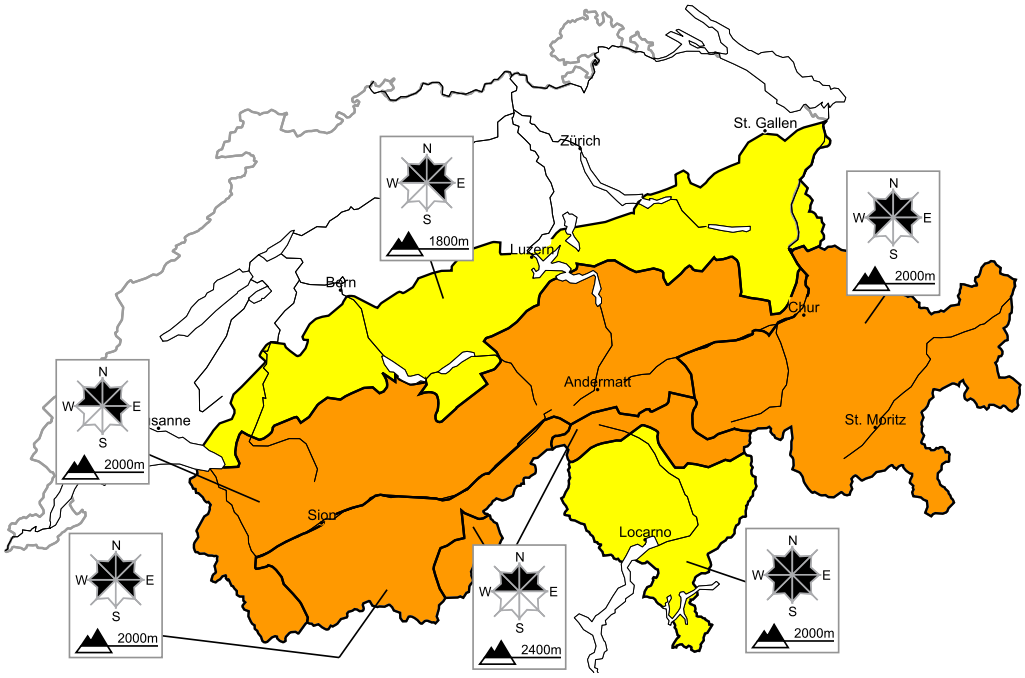
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area. Snow drifts and weakly bonded old snow require caution

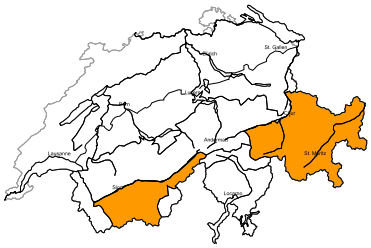
Edition: 10.2.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 10.2.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 10.2.2017, 08:00

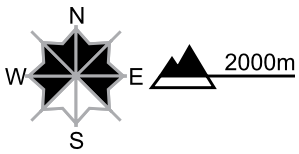


region A | **Level 3, considerable**



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Distinct weak layers in the old snowpack necessitate caution. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In particular on shady slopes these can penetrate even deep layers and reach a dangerous size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Remote triggering is possible.
As a consequence of the southerly wind avalanche prone snow drift accumulations will form, in particular at elevated altitudes.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
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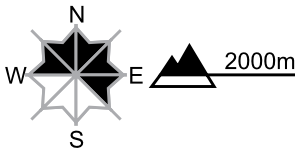
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



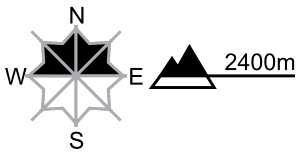
Danger description

As a consequence of the southerly wind sometimes large snow drift accumulations will form. This applies in particular in the regions exposed to the foehn wind as well as at elevated altitudes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can in isolated cases reach medium size.
Careful route selection is required. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

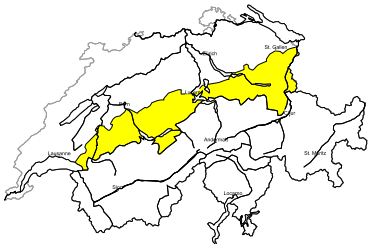
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

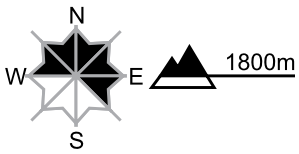
As a consequence of the southerly wind sometimes avalanche prone snow drift accumulations will form. This applies in particular at elevated altitudes. They are to be found especially adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. Careful route selection is required. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



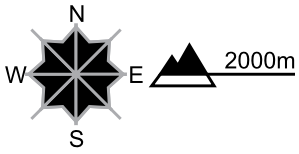
Danger description

As a consequence of the southerly wind rather small snow drift accumulations will form. These are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence. Meticulous route selection is recommended.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released by people. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack, when entering gullies and bowls for example. They are covered with fresh snow and therefore difficult to recognise. Careful route selection is recommended.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 9.2.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of increasingly intense southerly winds, small-sized snowdrift accumulations have formed on the northern Alpine Ridge and in the foehn-influenced regions of the north. These drifted masses tend to increase in size and frequency with ascending altitude, sometimes attaining a dangerously large size. The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are prone to triggering.
More deeply embedded inside the old snowpack at altitudes between 2200 and 2800 m, in particular on shady, wind-protected slopes, there are weak layers lurking inside the snowpack. These are especially threatening, i.e. prone to triggering, in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, it is in the places where snow is shallow or in transitions from shallow to deep snow that avalanches are most likely to trigger in the weakened old snow cover.

Observed weather on Thursday, 9.2.2017

During the night in western and in northern regions above approximately 800 m, there was a few centimeters of fresh fallen snow registered. Subsequently the snowfall came to an end which in some regions had persisted since Tuesday midday. During the daytime in northern regions below approximately 1600 m, there was cloud resembling high fog. At altitudes above that fog it was quite sunny. In southern regions skies were for the most part overcast, but it remained dry.

Fresh snow

Between Tuesday midday and Thursday morning above approximately 1500 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered:
- northern flank of the Alps west of the Reuss, Lower Valais: 15 to 30 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, Upper Valais: 5 to 15 cm;
- Grisons and Ticino: only a few centimeters; or no snow at all.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -6 °C in Ticino; and -4 °C in the remaining regions of Switzerland.

Wind

- During the night, winds were northeasterly, blowing predominantly at light strength.
- During the daytime, winds were blowing from southerly directions, on the northern Alpine Ridge increasing to moderate-to-strong velocity.

Weather forecast through Friday, 10.2.2017

In northern regions skies will be overcast, full of cloud resembling high fog below approximately 1000 m. Above that altitude in eastern regions, it will be quite sunny during the morning; in the afternoon, frequently overcast. In western regions, skies will initially be overcast, in the afternoon partly sunny. In southern regions above approximately 6000 m, there will be a small amount of snowfall.

Fresh snow

By Friday evening, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow are anticipated:
- central sector of southern flank of the Alps: 5 to 10 cm;
- remaining sectors of Main Alpine Ridge: only a few centimeters;
- in other regions of Switzerland, no snowfall whatever.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -4 °C in northern regions and -6 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- During the night on the northern Alpine Ridge, in the foehn-exposed valleys of the north, and at high altitudes in general, moderate-to-strong southerly winds; in other regions winds blowing at light strength.
- During the daytime, moderate-to-strong southerly winds at high altitudes, in other regions winds blowing at light-to-moderate strength.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 10 February 2017

Outlook through Sunday, 12.2.2017

In northern regions it will be predominantly sunny in the mountains on both days, apart from high altitude cloudbanks. In western regions, the cloudbanks are expected to be somewhat denser. In southern regions, a small additional amount of snowfall is anticipated by Saturday morning, subsequently there will be bright intervals evident. On Sunday, skies will be variably cloudy but it will remain dry. The avalanche danger is expected to decrease, but only slowly in the regions where the old snow cover has weakened layers.