Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 13 February 2017

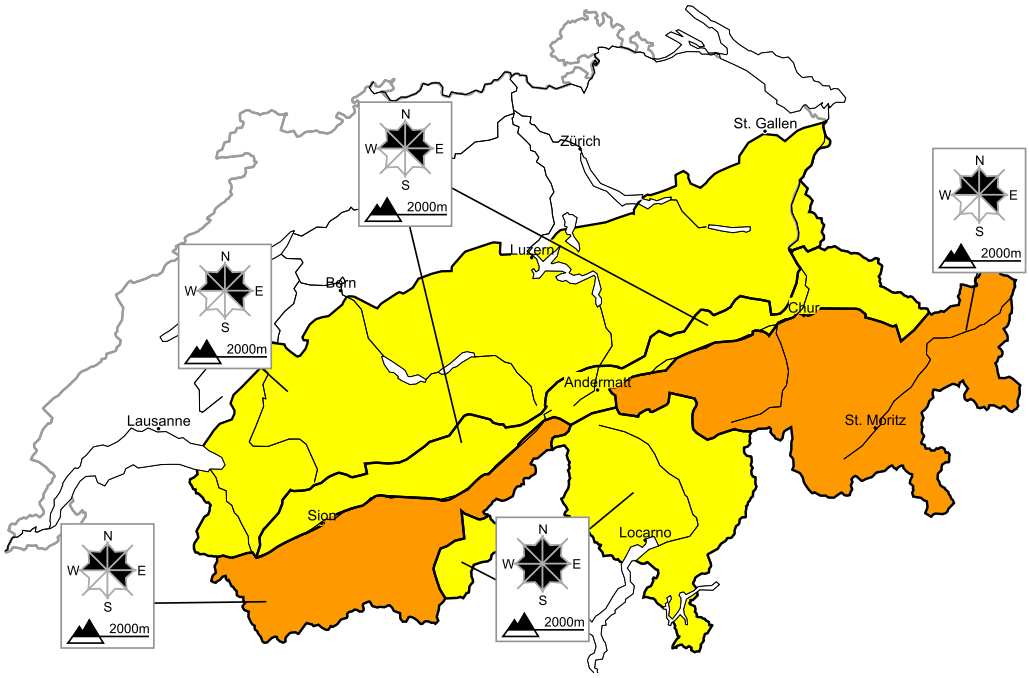
13.2.2017, 07:38

In Valais and in Grisons a considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area. Snow drifts and weakly bonded old snow require caution

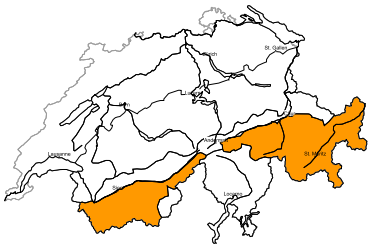
Edition: 13.2.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 13.2.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 13.2.2017, 08:00

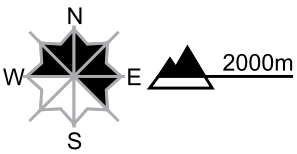


region A — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



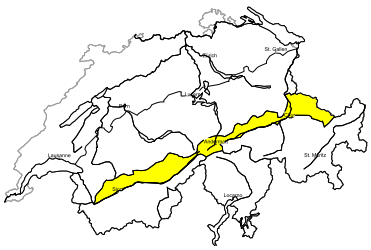
Danger description

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, especially in little used backcountry terrain. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Remote triggering is possible.
Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations can in some cases be released easily. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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

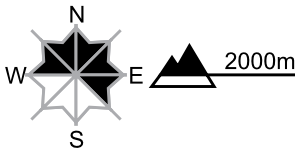
WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region B — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations

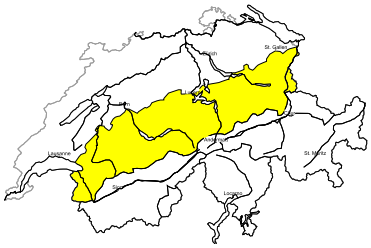


Danger description

Weak layers in the lower part of the snowpack are treacherous. In isolated cases avalanches can penetrate even deep layers and reach a dangerous size, especially in little used backcountry terrain. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular on steep shady slopes above approximately 2000 m. Isolated whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger. Steep shady slopes are to be traversed by snow sport participants one at a time.

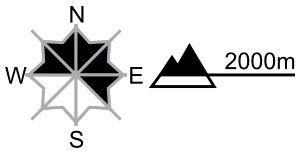
Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations can in some cases be released easily. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



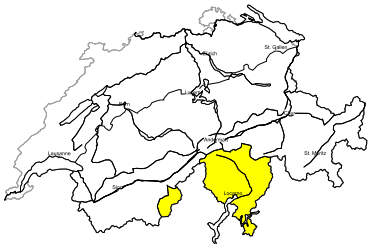
Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are to be assessed with care and prudence. These are mostly small. They are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. Snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released. In regions exposed to the foehn wind and at elevated altitudes avalanche prone locations are a little more prevalent. Meticulous route selection is recommended.

Full-depth avalanches

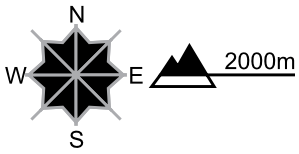
Below approximately 2000 m mostly small full-depth avalanches are possible.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, 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.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

Snowpack and weather

updated on 12.2.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southerly winds on Friday and over the weekend which in some places were strong, snowdrift accumulations formed on the northern Alpine Ridge and in higher altitude foehn-exposed regions of the north more than anywhere else. In these regions, the drifted masses became quite large in some places; in the other regions the drifts were generally small-sized. These older drifts, together with the fresh drifts expected to form on Sunday, will be prone to triggering in some places.
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.
Particularly in northern regions on steep, south-facing slopes below approximately 2500 m, a crust has formed on the snowpack surface. On the southern flank of the Alps the snowpack surface has become loose because of the fresh fallen snow of the last few days.

Observed weather on Sunday, 12.2.2017

In the western and central sectors of the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom, skies were for the most part heavily overcast. In westrn regions it was rather sunny, in eastern regions predominantly so.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +2 °C in northern regions, -3 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds were blowing from southerly directions,
· on the northern Alpine Ridge at moderate to strong velocity;
· in other regions of Switzerland mostly at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Monday, 13.2.2017

On the southern flank of the Alps skies will be intermittently overcast. In the other regions of Switzerland it will be predominantly sunny in the mountains.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m in northern regions, +3 °C; in southern regions -3 °C.

Wind

Winds will be blowing from southerly directions, mostly at light to moderate strength, in the Alpine valleys it will be foehn.

Outlook through Wednesday, 15.2.2017

In southern regions it will become less cloudy on Tuesdasy and on Wednesday it is expected to be sunny. In the remaining regions it will be sunny on both days. The avalanche danger is expected to diminish, but only slowly in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons.