Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 25 February 2017

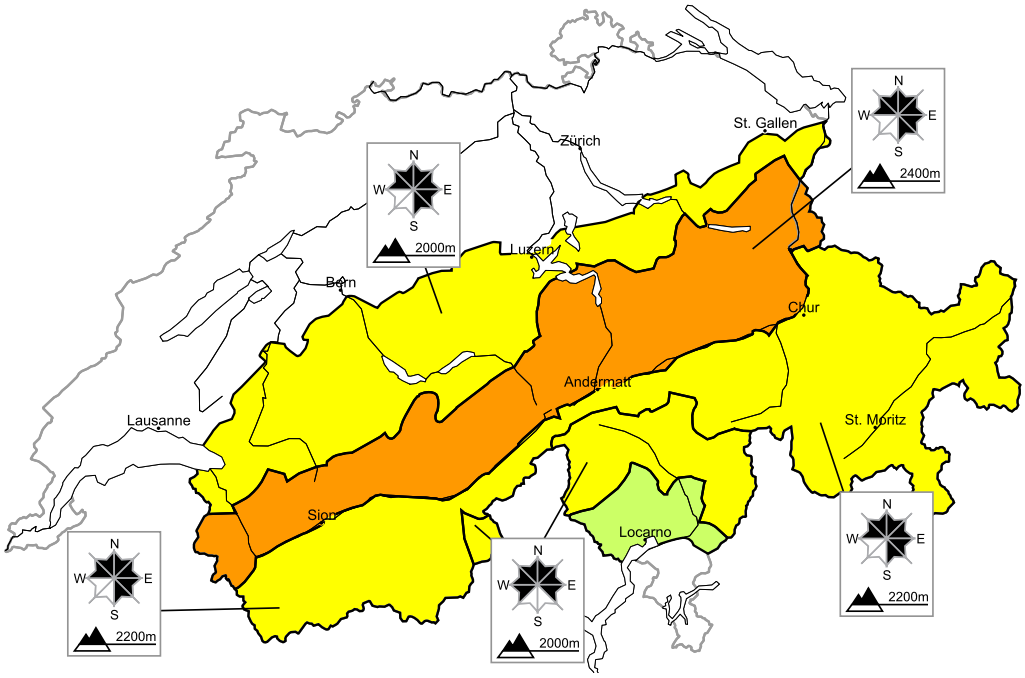
25.2.2017, 07:42

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions. Fresh snow drifts require caution

Edition: 25.2.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 25.2.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

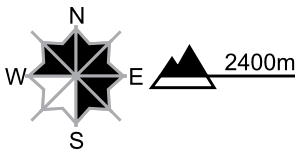
updated on 25.2.2017, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



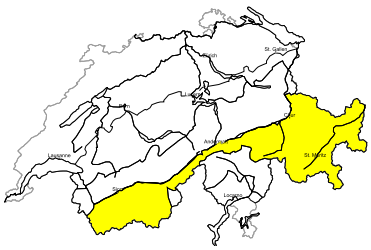
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind sometimes avalanche prone snow drift accumulations have formed. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain and adjacent to the ridge line in all aspects. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

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

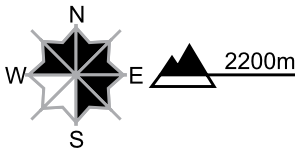
WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region B — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



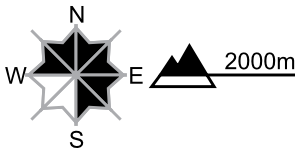
Danger description

In particular at elevated altitudes sometimes avalanche prone snow drift accumulations have formed. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain and adjacent to the ridge line in all aspects. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. In particular on little-used, rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes the avalanches can penetrate even deep layers and reach a dangerous size. These avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for defensive route selection. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



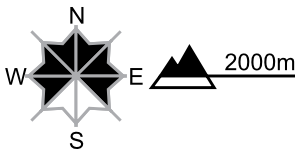
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind sometimes avalanche prone snow drift accumulations have formed. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain and adjacent to the ridge line in all aspects. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. Off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

region D — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of the northerly wind mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Snow drift accumulations can be released by a single winter sport participant. Careful route selection is recommended.

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

region E

Level 1, low

Snow drifts

As a consequence of the northerly wind small snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in extreme terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 24.2.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of strong-velocity westerly and northwesterly winds, the new fallen snow - and also the old snow in some places - is being transported. In the Valais and in northern regions, at high altitudes more than anywhere else, wide-ranging snowdrift accumulations have been formed in some places. These drifted masses are prone to triggering and currently form the major avalanche peril.
More deeply embedded inside the snow cover at altitudes between 2200 m and 2800 m on wind-protected, shady slopes more than anywhere else, weakened layers are evident. This old-snow problem threatens particularly, i.e. is especially prone to triggering, in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons. However the likelihood of triggering and of a fracture propagating have diminished significantly. In these regions, as well as to a lesser degree in the remaining regions of Switzerland, it is particularly the shallow-snow zones or the transitions from shallow to deep snow which in isolated cases can still trigger avalanches that fracture down to lower-level layers of the snowpack.
Below approximately 2000m the thoroughly wet snow cover has stabilised as a result of the receding temperatures.

Observed weather on Friday, 24.2.2017

In northern regions skies were overcast for the most part and there was some snowfall which slackened off during the course of the day. In northeastern regions the snowfall level descended from approximately 1500 m down to below 1000 m. In western regions the snowfall level also descended, but was approximately 500 m higher up. In the Valais and on the southern flank of the Alps it became increasingly sunny during the course of the day. In Grisons there were some bright intervals during the afternoon.

Fresh snow

Above approximately 1800 m, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered:
- central sector of the northern flank of the Alps not including the Gotthard region; eastern sector of the northern flank of the Alps: 15 to 25 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, Gotthard region, northern Grisons: 5 to 15 cm;
- Valais and central Grisons: only a few centimeters; further to the south it generally remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -7 °C in northern regions and -2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- During the night winds were blowing at strong velocity from the west, also down to intermediate altitudes;
- During the daytime winds at high altitude were moderate from the northwest.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 25.2.2017

After the last residual clouds disperse in northern regions it will become sunny, apart from some high-altitude clouds.

Fresh snow

In northeastern regions an additional few centimeters of snowfall is expected during the night.

Temperature

Temperatures will rise, starting in the west. At midday at 2000 m, between 0 °C in western regions and -4 °C in eastern and southern regions.

Wind

- Winds at high altitudes will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from north to northeast.
- In the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, strong northerly foehn wind will be blowing down to low lying areas during the night.

Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 25 February 2017

Outlook through Monday, 27.2.2017

Sunday

Apart from high-altitude clouds it will be predominantly sunny. Winds will generally be light. The avalanche danger is expected to diminish, but only slowly in the inneralpine regions.

Monday

Amidst intermittently dense high-altitude clouds it will be only partly sunny. During the course of the day, strong to storm-strength southwesterly winds are expected to arise. Then the avalanche danger will increase somewhat during the course of the day as a result of freshly formed snowdrifts, in northern regions more than anywhere else.