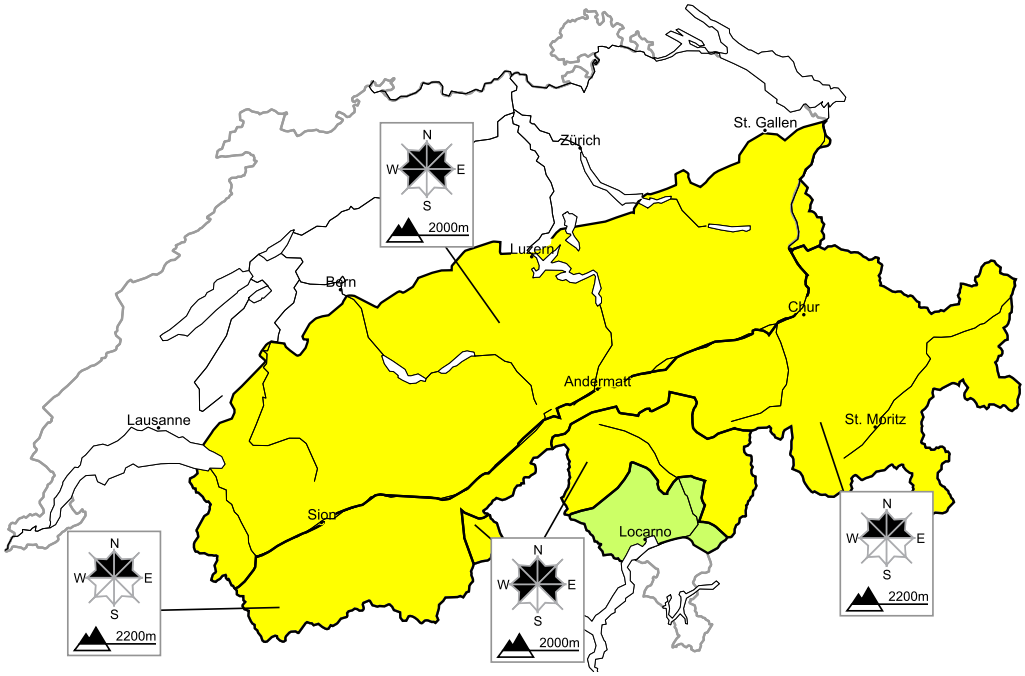
Moderate avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

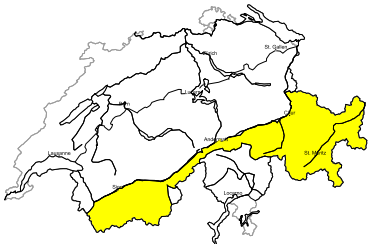
Edition: 26.2.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 26.2.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 26.2.2017, 08:00

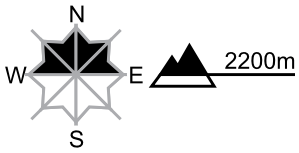


region A — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in isolated cases be released in the weakly bonded old snow on little-used, rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes. These can reach dangerously large size. The avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye.

In addition, 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. Snow drift accumulations can in isolated cases be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for defensive route selection. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

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

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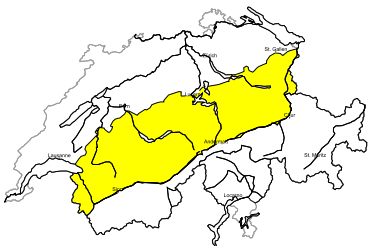
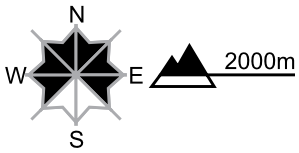
region B — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



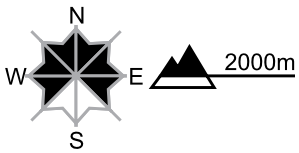
Danger description

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 in some cases be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases. The snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

region C — 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. The fresh snow drift accumulations can in some cases be released by a single winter sport participant. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain.

region D — Level 1, low

Snow drifts

The fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in extreme terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 25.2.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

The snowdrift accumulations which lie closest to the uppermost surface of the snow cover are only to a certain extent prone to triggering, and generally small-sized. The older snowdrift accumulations are for the most part well consolidated. 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 2000 m the thoroughly wet snow cover has stabilised as a result of the receding temperatures.

Observed weather on Saturday, 25.2.2017

The snowfall came to an end during the night and the skies cleared. During the daytime it was sunny, apart from some high-altitude clouds.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and Saturday morning, the following amounts of fresh fallen snow were registered above approximately 1800 m:

- 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 30 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 -3 °C in western regions and -5 °C in eastern and southern regions.

Wind

- in the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, strong northerly foehn winds during the night; then slackening off during the daytime;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, light to moderate northeasterly winds at high altitude.

Weather forecast through Sunday, 26.2.2017

Only a small amount of sunshine as a result of dense, high-altitude clouds.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +3 °C.

Wind

Winds will be westerly, blowing at light to moderate strength.

Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 26 February 2017

Outlook through Tuesday, 28.2.2017

Monday

In northern regions it will be quite sunny, despite high-altitude cloudbanks. In southern regions skies will be variably cloudy. In northern regions, strong-velocity southwesterly winds are expected to arise during the course of the day. As a result of snowdrift accumulations, the avalanche danger will increase somewhat in northern regions. In the remaining regions of Switzerland the danger levels will incrementally decrease.

Tuesday

Above approximately 1200 m snowfall is anticipated over widespread areas, presumably the snowfall will be heavy in western and in southeastern regions. As a result of the strong-velocity westerly winds, snowdrift accumulations will form over widespread areas. The avalanche danger will increase.