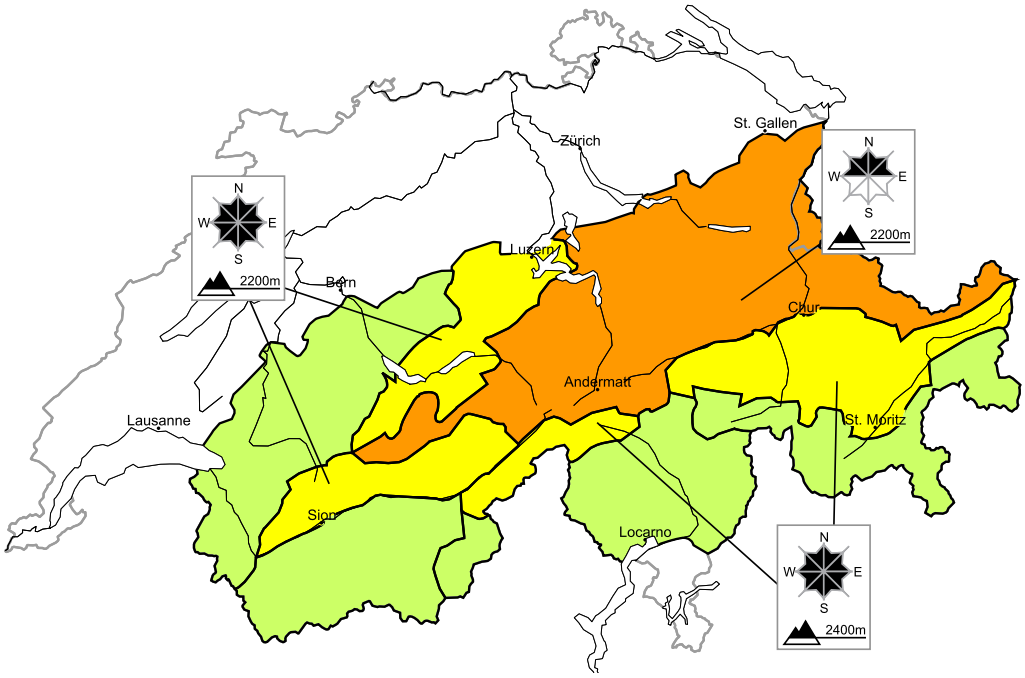
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 21.4.2017, 17:00 / Next update: 22.4.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

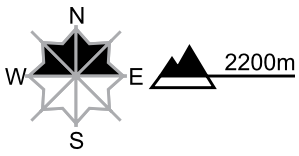
updated on 21.4.2017, 17:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



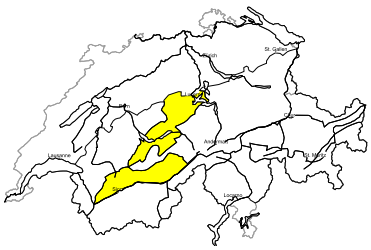
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of the last few days are prone to triggering. Single snow sport participants can release avalanches. This applies in particular on very steep west, north and east facing slopes. Avalanche prone locations are to be found also adjacent to the ridge line in all aspects. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

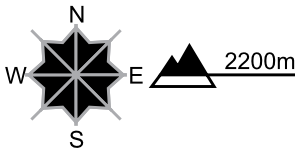
As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation moist snow slides and avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2600 m. In particular on steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are possible.

region B — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



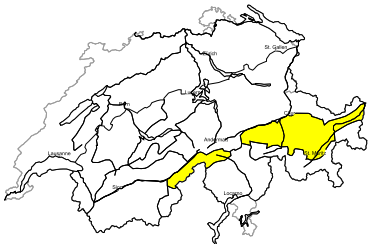
Danger description

The snow drift accumulations of the last few days represent the main danger. These are mostly only small but can in some cases be released easily. They are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

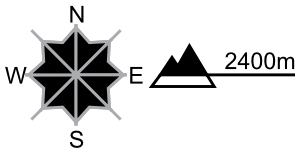
As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation moist snow slides and avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2800 m. In particular on steep grassy slopes full-depth avalanches are possible.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are in some cases prone to triggering. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. The snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence in very steep terrain.

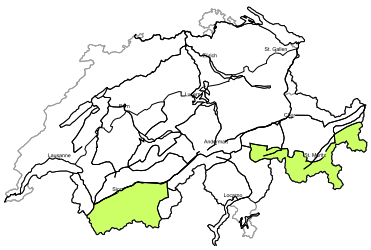
Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can be released in deep layers and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are very rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. They are to be found in particular on little used, rather lightly snow-covered north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation moist snow slides and avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2800 m.

region D

Level 1, low



Snow drifts, old snow

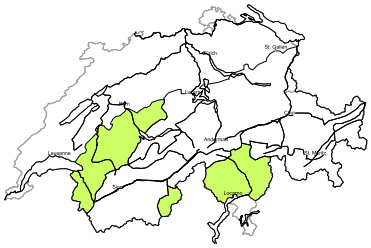
Mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in extreme terrain. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.
Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can be released in deep layers and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are very rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. They are to be found in particular on little used, rather lightly snow-covered north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation moist snow slides and avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2800 m.

region E

Level 1, low



Snow drifts

Mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. They 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.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation moist snow slides and avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2800 m.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
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Snowpack and weather

updated on 21.4.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

The fresh fallen and freshly drifted snow of this week has settled and consolidated only very slowly as a result of the low temperatures. On steep, north-facing slopes, more than anywhere else, the snow is still loosely-packed and prone to triggering. On east-, south- and west-facing slopes, a melt-freeze crust forms on the snowpack surface during the night which on north and east facing slopes tends to be breakable, i.e. is not capable of bearing loads. As a result of northerly winds, fresh snowdrift accumulations are continuing to form at high altitudes.
Deeply embedded inside the snow cover there are layers of faceted-crystal snow. These are most likely to be trigger-sensitive on the seldom-skied north-facing slopes of southern Valais and Grisons at altitudes between 2400 and 3000 m. Before temperatures plummeted and the snowfall set in this week, the snow cover on north-facing slopes below approximately 2400 m, and on south-facing slopes below approximtely 3000 m, was already thoroughly wet.

Observed weather on Friday, 21.4.2017

Following a night of clear skies it was sunny.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between + 2 °C in western and southern regions and -3 °C in eastern regions.

Wind
Winds were northerly, blowing at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 22.4.2017

Nocturnal skies on Friday night will be clear. During the day on Saturday it will be predominantly sunny in western and southern regions. In northern and eastern regions it will be sunny to start with; subsequently skies will become increasingly overcast from the northeast as midday nears.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between +2 °C in western regions; and -2 °C in eastern regions; and +5 °C in southern regions.

Wind
Winds are expected to be northwesterly, blowing at light to moderate strength, at moderate to strong velocity in high alpine regions.

Outlook through Monday, 24.4.2017

Sunday
Nocturnal skies in western and in southern regions will be clear; subsequently it will be predominantly sunny during the daytime. In northern and eastern regions, nocturnal skies will be overcast for the most part and between 5 and 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated. The snowfall level will descend from 1600 m down to 1200 m. During the morning hours, the snowfall will come to an end and it will become increasingly sunny from the west over the course of the day. The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to diminish. In the regions where solar radiation has an impact, the danger of wet-snow avalanches will increase during the course of the day.

Monday
In northern regions: nocturnal skies will be clear, and during the daytime it will be predominantly sunny, accompanied by convective cloud build-up and isolated showers distributed over the course of the day. The danger of dry-snow avalanches will decrease. The danger of wet-snow avalanches will be subject to a daytime danger cycle.
In southern regions: nocturnal skies will be predominantly overcast and during the daytime a small amount of snowfall is anticipated above approximately 1600 m. The avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.