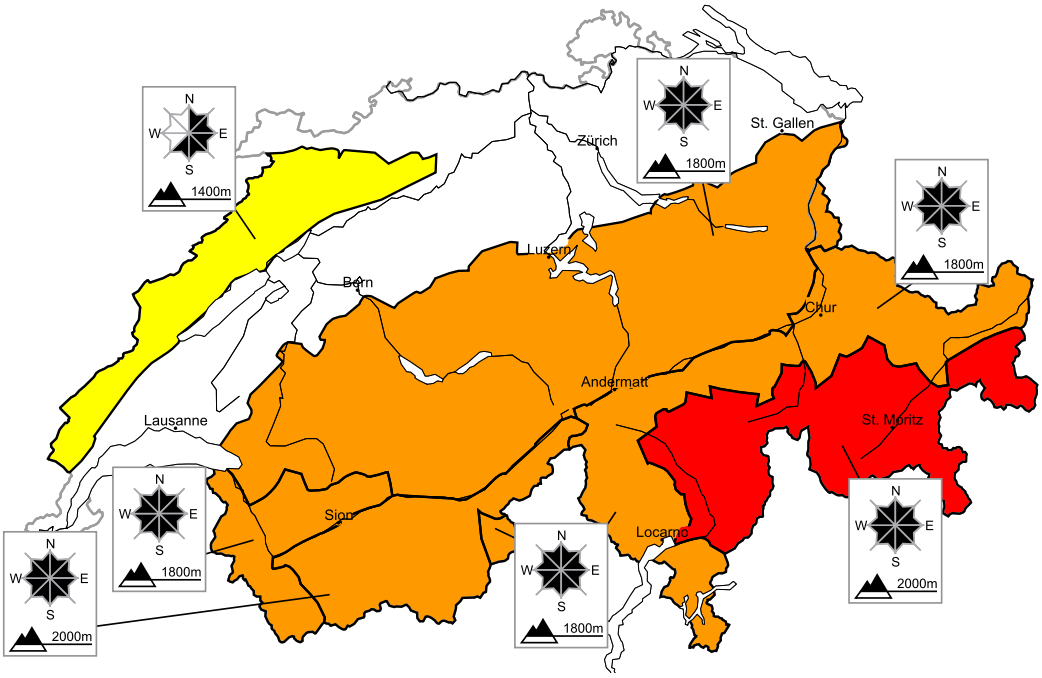
In the southeast a high avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

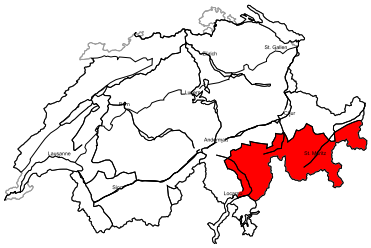
Edition: 12.12.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 12.12.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 12.12.2017, 08:00

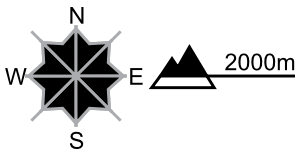


region A | **Level 4, high**



Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

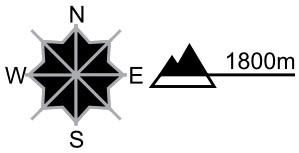
As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather extensive snow drift accumulations have formed. They are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on west, north and east facing slopes. Only isolated natural avalanches are possible. In particular from starting zones at higher altitudes individual large avalanches are possible. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered in these regions.
The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes remain very critical. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and great restraint.

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

region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



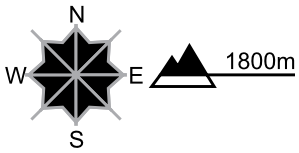
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather extensive snow drift accumulations have formed. They are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on west, north and east facing slopes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including dangerously large ones. Individual natural avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for caution and restraint.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

In the last few days extensive snow drift accumulations have formed. These remain prone to triggering. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including medium-sized ones. Only isolated natural avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

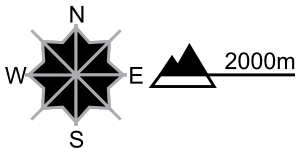
Wet and full-depth avalanches

Full-depth avalanches are possible on steep grassy slopes. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2400 m as well as on north facing slopes below approximately 2000 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.
As the temperature drops there will be a gradual decrease in the danger of wet avalanches. Only isolated wet snow slides and avalanches are possible below approximately 2000 m.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

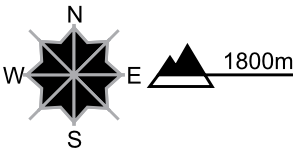
As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather extensive snow drift accumulations have formed. They are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on west, north and east facing slopes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including dangerously large ones. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

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

region E — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



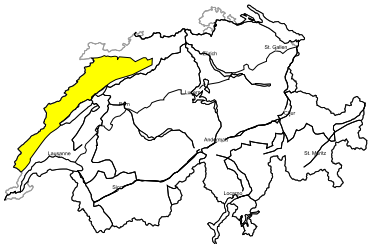
Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are in some cases prone to triggering. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including dangerously large ones. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

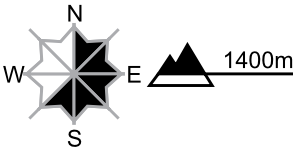
Mostly small full-depth avalanches are possible on steep grassy slopes. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2400 m as well as on north facing slopes below approximately 2000 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.
As the temperature drops there will be a gradual decrease in the danger of wet avalanches. Only isolated wet snow slides and avalanches are possible below approximately 2000 m.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, wet avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Adjacent to the ridge line mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be avoided especially in rocky terrain.
On very steep slopes individual wet snow slides are possible.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 11.12.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of fresh snow and storm-strength winds, slab-like snowdrift accumulations have been forming since Friday in all regions of Switzerland. These snowdrifts are largest in western and northern regions. In southern Valais, in the Ticino, in central Grisons, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, the snowdrift accumulations have in many places been deposited on top of a weakened old snowpack. Also in northern Valais, in the Gotthard region and in northern Grisons, the old snow cover in many areas harbours weak layers. Avalanche triggerings inside the old snowpack are possible in these regions. The snowpack structuring is most favourable on the northern flank of the Alps.
In the regions of the north where snowfall has been heaviest, more than anywhere else, gliding avalanche triggerings continue to be possible.

Observed weather on Monday, 11.12.2017

- Northern flank of the Alps: precipitation slackened off during the night; temperatures rose significantly; snowfall level at 2000 m; foehn storm set in.
- Valais: heavy snowfall above 800 to 1200 m during the night; slackened off during the course of the day.
- Central and eastern parts of Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom: during the course of the day, ever more intense snowfall; snowfall level on the Main Alpine Ridge at 1500 to 2000 m, but on the southern flank of the Alps at low lying areas.

Fresh snow

Between Sunday afternoon and Monday afternoon, the following amounts of snowfall were registered above approximately 1800 m:

- Lower Valais, northern Valais, central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, Upper Engadine, Val Bregaglia and Val Poschiavo: 20 to 40 cm;
- remaining regions of Switzerland: 5 to 15 cm.

All in all between Friday evening and Monday morning in the Lower Valais and in the northern Valais, there was 60 to 110 cm of snowfall; on the northern flank of the Alps 40 to 60 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -5 °C in the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps; +3 °C in the remaining regions of Switzerland.

Wind

Winds were blowing at strong to storm velocity from the south; in the Alpine valleys of the north, foehn wind prevailed.

Avalanche bulletin for Tuesday, 12 December 2017

Weather forecast through Tuesday, 12.12.2017

Throughout Monday night, the intensive southerly foehn scenario will continue to prevail. In the furthermost western regions and on the southern flank of the Alps, quite heavy precipitation is anticipated, which will come to an end in the latter part of the night. The snowfall level in western regions and on the Main Alpine Ridge will be at approximately 1500 m; on the southern flank of the Alps at low lying areas. During the daytime it wil be dry in southern regions. In northern regions, light snowfall is expected to set in and the snowfall level will subsequently descend down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

Between Monday afternoon and Tuesday afternoon, the following amounts of snowfall are anticipated above approximately 1500 m:

- Chablais, Vaud Alps, Trient, Main Alpine Ridge from Lukmanier Pass into Val Müstair, Upper Engadine: 30 to 50 cm; as much as 80 cm from Val Bregaglia into the Bernina region.
- Fribourg Alps, western part of Bernese Oberland, remaining parts of Ticino, central Grisons, remaining parts of Engadine: 15 to 30 cm;
- remaining regions of Switzerland: 10 to 20 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -8 °C in northern regions and -4 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- During the night, winds will continue to blow at strong to storm velocity from the south; in the northern Alpine valleys, foehn wind will prevail.
- During the daytime, winds will shift to southwesterly and slacken off significantly.

Outlook through Thursday, 14.12.2017

Wednesday

It will be quite sunny. During the afternoon, new cloud cover will move in from the west. The avalanche danger will decrease, however only very gradually in the inneralpine and southern regions due to the unfavourable snowpack structuring.

Thursday

Renewed snowfall is expected to set in, coming from the west. The snowfall level will descend from intermediate altitudes down to low lying areas. A strong to storm-strength westerly to southwesterly wind will be blowing. The avalanche danger will increase in western regions. In eastern regions, the danger levels are not expected to change significantly.