Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 17 December 2017

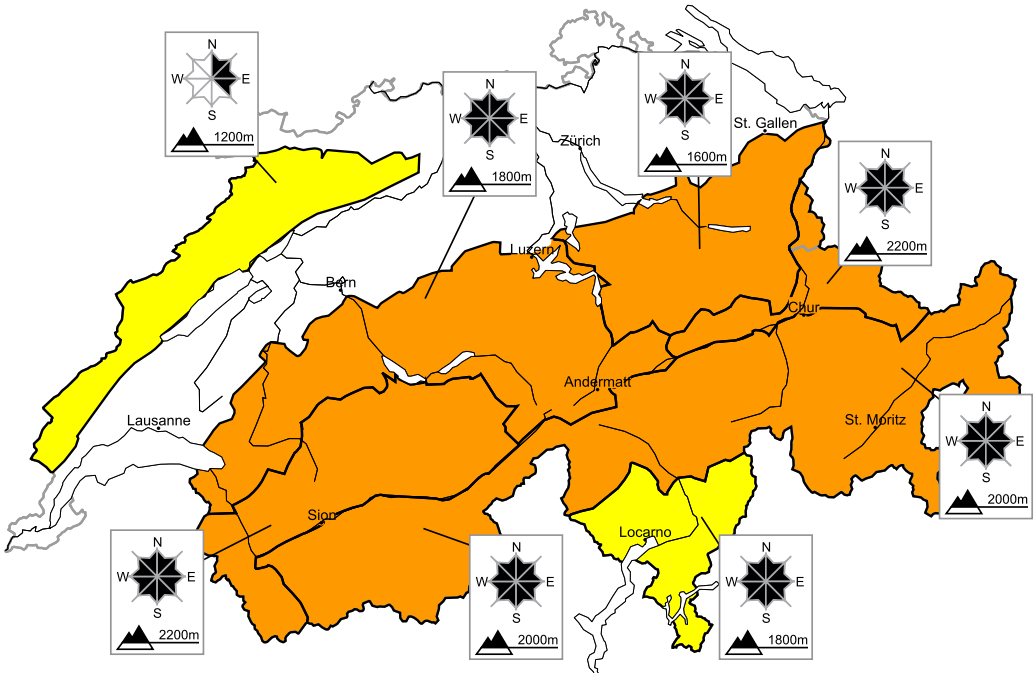
17.12.2017, 07:43

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 17.12.2017, 08:00 / Next update: 17.12.2017, 17:00

Avalanche danger

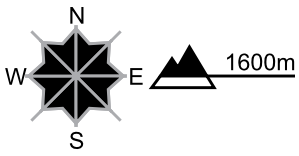
updated on 17.12.2017, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. Avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on very steep slopes and adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach dangerously large size. Individual natural avalanches are possible.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

On steep grassy slopes small to medium-sized full-depth avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2200 m as well as on north facing slopes below approximately 1800 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

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

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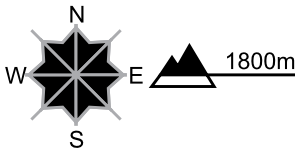
region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



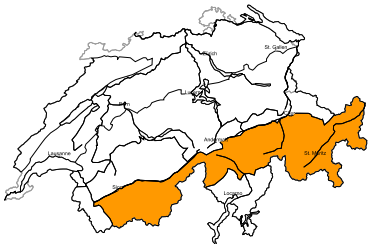
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations represent the main danger. Avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on very steep slopes and adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach dangerously large size.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

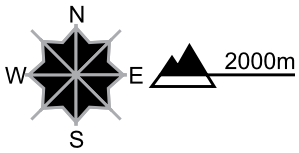
On steep grassy slopes small to medium-sized full-depth avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2200 m as well as on north facing slopes below approximately 1800 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can be triggered in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
As a consequence of the northerly wind easily released snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be avoided as far as possible.
Experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is required.

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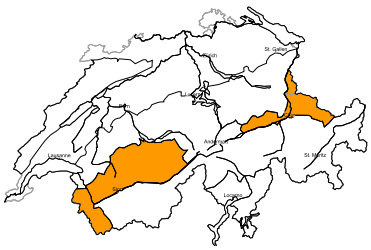
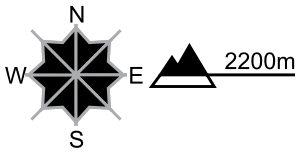
region D — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



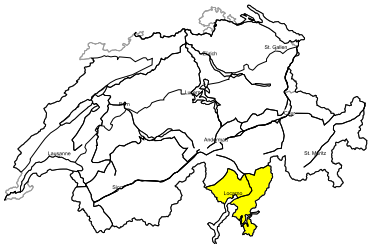
Danger description

Easily released snow drift accumulations have formed. This applies especially adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. At elevated altitudes the avalanche prone locations increase. The older snow drift accumulations of Friday can be released in isolated cases, but mostly only by large additional loads,. Caution is to be exercised in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack.
Winter sport participants can release avalanches, including medium-sized ones. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

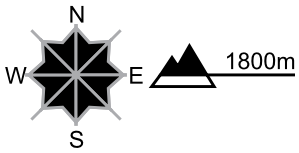
On steep grassy slopes small to medium-sized full-depth avalanches are possible. This applies in particular on steep east, south and west facing slopes below approximately 2200 m as well as on north facing slopes below approximately 1800 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region E — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

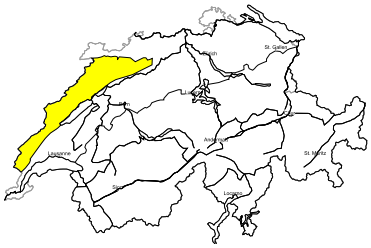
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

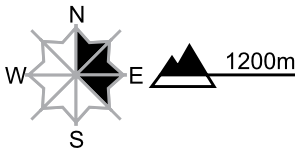
Avalanches can in some places be released by people, but they will be small in most cases. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular on very steep shady slopes. In addition, mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed, especially on south facing slopes. Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Especially adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas mostly small snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in very steep terrain. Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 16.12.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of moderate-to-strong velocity northerly to northwesterly winds, easily triggerable snowdrift accumulations are forming.
The basis of the snow cover is weak in the southern part of the Valais, in the Ticino, in central Grisons, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons more than anywhere else. In those regions, avalanches can fracture inside the old snowpack. However, also in the remaining regions of Switzerland the snowpack harbours weak layers in some places, particularly in western to northern aspects above 2000 m. Avalanches can in isolated cases break away down to the old snowpack in these regions as well.
In the western and northern regions where snowfall has been heaviest more than anywhere else, gliding avalanches continue to be possible.

Observed weather on Saturday, 16.12.2017

During the night in northern regions, light snowfall set in. In the inneralpine and southern regions, skies were partially clear. During the daytime in southern regions, it was sunny. In eastern regions there were intermittent bright intervals. In the other regions of Switzerland skies were heavily overcast accompanied by snowfall down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

Between Friday evening and Saturday afternoon above 1500 m:
· western sector of the northern flank of the Alps: 10 to 25 cm;
· Jura region, Lower Valais,central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps: 5 to 15 cm;
· in the other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimeters; or else it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -8 °C in northern regions and -6 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds were blowing at light to moderate strength from the northwest; on the southern flank of the Alps at moderate strength from the north.

Weather forecast through Sunday, 17.12.2017

During the night there will be snowfall over widespread areas. The snowfall level will extend down to low lying areas. Only on the southern flank of the Alps is it expected to remain dry. During the morning the snowfall is expected to slacken off in western regions, bright intervals are possible. In eastern regions skies will remain heavily overcast accompanied by snowfall which will persist well into the afternoon. In southern regions it will be dry and quite sunny as a result of the northerly winds.

Fresh snow

Above 1500 m:
· northern flank of the Alps from the Jungfrau to the Säntis: 15 to 30 cm, as much as 40 cm from place to place;
· remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, northern Grisons: 10 to 20 cm;
· Valais, remaining parts of Grisons not including the southern valleys: 5 to 10 cm;
· southern flank of the Alps: it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -11 °C in northern regions and -8 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will be moderate, blowing at strong velocity in high alpine regions and on the southern flank of the Alps, from northerly to northwesterly directions.

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Outlook through Tuesday, 19.12.2017

On Monday, snowfall over widespread areas is anticipated. Only in the furthermost southern regions is it expected to remain dry. On the northern flank of the Alps, as much as 20 to 40 cm of snowfall is expected from region to region. On Tuesday, it will remain dry for the most part. From the west it will become increasingly sunny. In southern regions is will be sunny.
On Monday, the avalanche danger could increase somewhat from region to region on the northern flank of the Alps. In the Valais and Grisons, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly. In the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, the avalanche situation is favourable by and large.
In spite of the low temperatures, gliding avalanches continue to be possible in isolated cases.