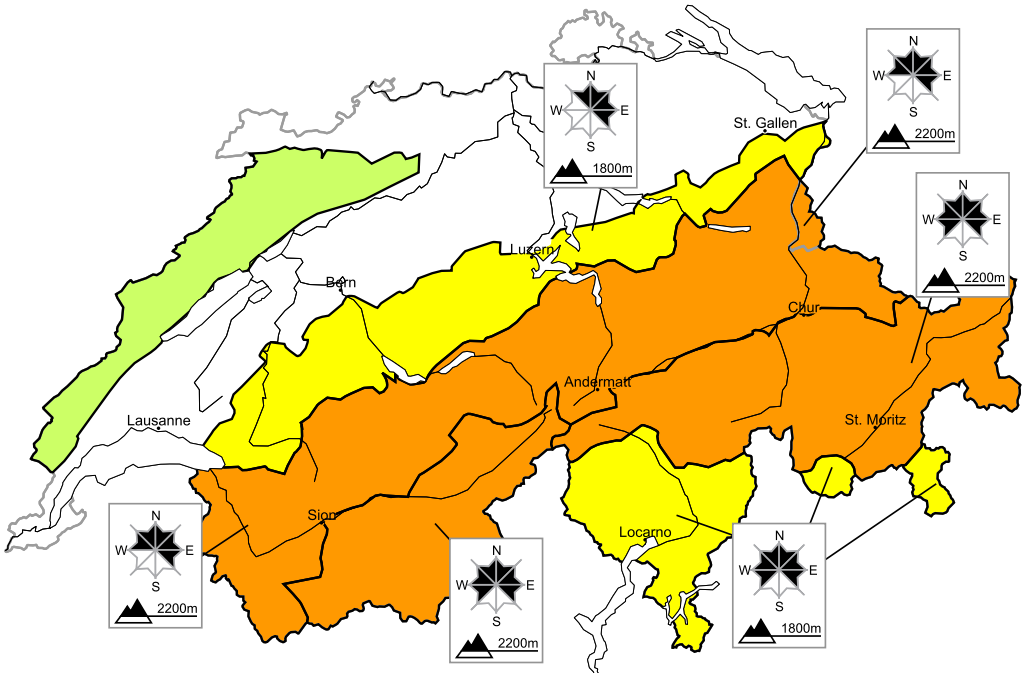
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 1.1.2018, 08:00 / Next update: 1.1.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

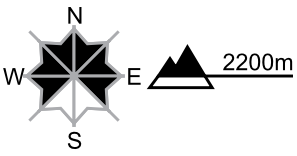
updated on 1.1.2018, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

In some places avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These places are barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. In southern Upper Valais avalanche prone locations are more prevalent. Whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger.
Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are in some cases prone to triggering. 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. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

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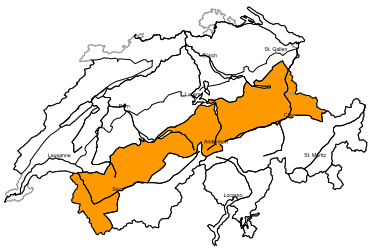
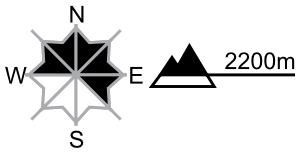
region B — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



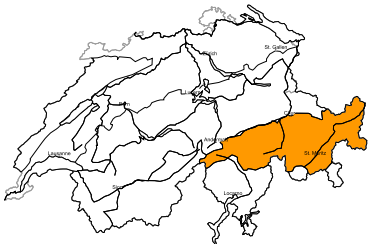
Danger description

The extensive snow drift accumulations of the weekend can still be released in some cases. These are covered with fresh snow and therefore difficult to recognise. As a consequence of the sometimes strong wind further snow drift accumulations will form, this also applies on south facing slopes. These can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

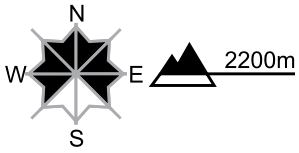
Individual full-depth avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



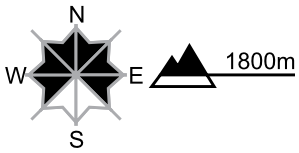
Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are in some cases prone to triggering. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. They are to be bypassed.
Additionally in some places avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow. They are rather rare but barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. Whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region D — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations can be released by a single winter sport participant in some cases. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. Mostly avalanches are small. Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack, especially on north facing slopes. Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

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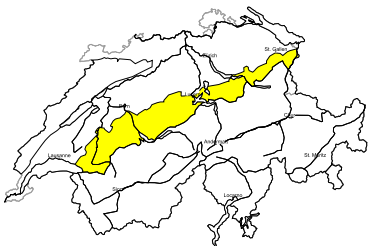
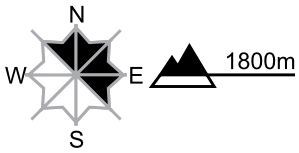
region E — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



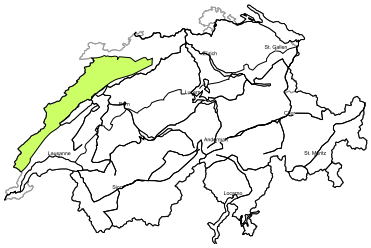
Danger description

As a consequence of the sometimes strong wind mostly small snow drift accumulations will form. These can be released by a single winter sport participant in some cases. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Backcountry touring and snowshoe hiking call for careful route selection.

Full-depth avalanches

Individual full-depth avalanches are possible.

region F — Level 1, low



Snow drifts

As a consequence of the sometimes strong wind small snow drift accumulations will form. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 31.12.2017, 17:00

Snowpack

At high altitudes and in high alpine regions, to some extent large-sized snowdrift accumulations have formed during the course of the last two days on the northern flank of the Alps and in the Valais more than anywhere else. These avalanche prone locations are being blanketed by fresher snow and are very difficult to recognize. Furthermore, as a result of strong-velocity winds on New Year's Day, additional snowdrift accumulations are expected to continue forming.
The snowpack in the southern Valais, in the Upper Valais, in the northern parts of the Ticino, in central Grisons, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, more than anywhere else, is only weakly consolidated at its base. In those regions, avalanches can be triggered in the layers of snow nearest to the ground, particularly on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes above approximately 2000 m.
On Saturday in northern and western regions the snow cover was severely weakened by intensive rainfall at intermediate and low altitudes. As temperatures recede, the snowpack is expected to restabilise below approximately 2000 m.

Observed weather on Sunday, 31.12.2017

In the early part of the night in northern regions, there was precipitation. By the end of this round of precipitation the snowfall level had ascended to nearly 2200 m on the northern flank of the Alps and in the western part of Valais; to 1800 m in the Upper Valais and in northern Grisons. Thereafter, skies cleared and it became sunny in the mountains during the course of the day.

Fresh snow

Between Friday evening and Sunday morning, the following amounts of snowfall were registered above approximately 2400 m:

- northern Alpine Ridge from Les Diablerets into the Glarner Alps, Valais: 40 to 60 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, northern parts of the Ticino, remaining parts of northern and central Grisons, Lower Engadine: 10 to 30 cm;
- further to the south, less; in the furthermost southern regions it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +6 °C in northern regions, +4 °C in eastern regions and +2 °C in the furthermost southern regions.

Wind

Winds were westerly,

- blowing at strong velocity in the Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps during the night, and slackening off during the daytime;
- blowing at moderate strength in Grisons and in the Ticino.

Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 1 January 2018

Weather forecast through Monday, 01.01.2018

During the night on New Year's Eve, precipitation will set in from the northwest. The snowfall level will descend from 1500 m down to nearly 1000 m. During the morning on New Year's Day the snowfall will come to an end and it will temporarily become quite sunny, before renewed cloud cover moves in from the west during the afternoon and snowfall subsequently sets in.

Fresh snow

During the night, the following amounts of snowfall are anticipated above approximately 2000 m:

- Chablais, furthermost western part of Lower Valais: 20 to 30 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps west of the Reuss, remaining parts of Lower Valais, Jura region: 10 to 20 cm;
- remaining regions of Switzerland, less; in southern regions it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -4 °C in northern regions and -2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- Winds in northern regions at high altitude and in the Prealps will be westerly, blowing predominantly at strong velocity.
- Winds in southern regions will be northwesterly, blowing at moderate strength.

Outlook through Wednesday, 03.01.2018

In northern regions skies will be heavily overcast on both days. Apart from a brief interim between spells of precipitation on Tuesday night, snowfall is anticipated, which will be heavy on the northern flank of the Alps and in the western part of Lower Valais. The snowfall level will be in low lying areas to begin with, then ascend to nearly 2000 m during the course of the day on Wednesday. A strong to storm-strength westerly wind will be blowing in the mountains. In southern regions it will be partly sunny on both days, accompanied by northerly winds.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches will increase in northern regions as a result of fresh snow and winds. Furthermore, as a result of rainfall on Wednesday, wet sluffs and wet-snow avalanches can be expected on Wednesday. In southern regions, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.