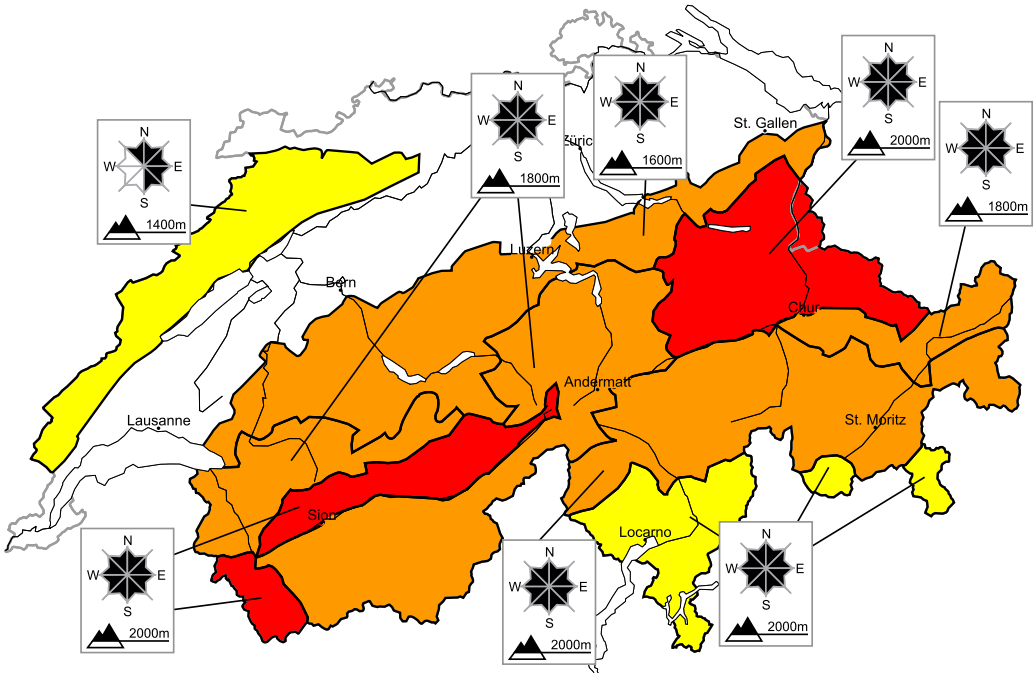
Stormy weather and fresh snow: In the west and in the east a high avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

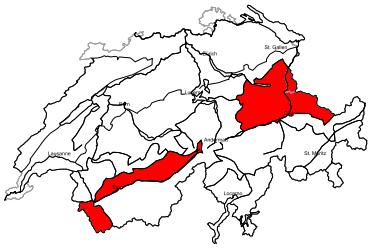
Edition: 19.1.2018, 08:00 / Next update: 19.1.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 19.1.2018, 08:00

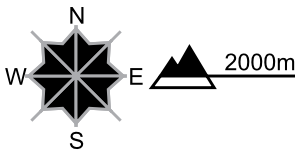


region A | **Level 4, high**



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The danger exists primarily in alpine snow sports terrain. As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather large snow drift accumulations have formed. Avalanches can be released very easily or triggered naturally. Individual large avalanches are possible as before. Slides are to be expected on cut slopes. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and great restraint.

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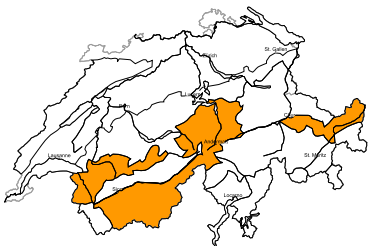
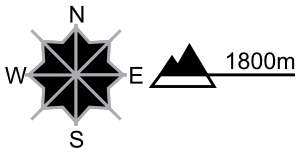
region B — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



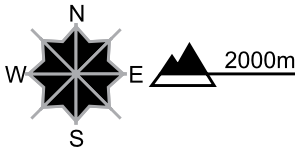
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather large snow drift accumulations have formed. Avalanches can be released very easily and reach medium size. Individual natural avalanches are possible.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can also be triggered in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size, in particular in Grisons.
Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



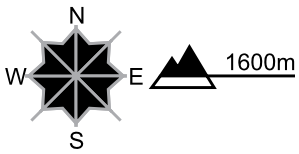
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather snow drift accumulations have formed. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Snow drift accumulations can be released very easily.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can also be triggered in near-ground layers and reach dangerously large size, in particular in Grisons.
Extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is required.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather snow drift accumulations have formed. These can be released easily. Avalanches can reach medium size in isolated cases. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain. Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

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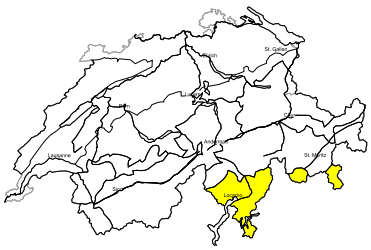
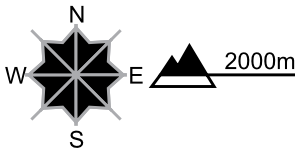
region E — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts, old snow

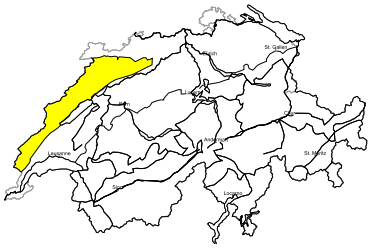
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

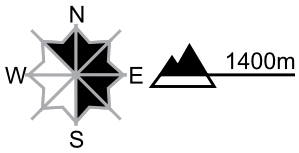
As a consequence of the sometimes storm force wind snow drift accumulations have formed. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack, especially on very steep west, north and east facing slopes. Careful route selection is recommended.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather snow drift accumulations have formed. These are mostly only small but can in some cases be released easily. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 18.1.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of heavy snowfall and storm winds, large-sized snowdrift accumulations have formed in western and northern regions. Both fresh snow and freshly formed snowdrifts have been deposited on top of a snowpack surface riddled with metamorphosed, faceted snow-crystals, particularly in wind-protected terrain on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes above approximately 2000 m. Particularly there, avalanches can be triggered quite easily. In the major areas of precipitation, naturally triggered avalanches are also possible.
Avalanches are unlikely to trigger in the old snowpack on the northern flank of the Alps, in western Ticino and in northern Grisons. Particularly above the treeline, weak ground-level layers in those regions are now covered with thick layers of snow. In central Grisons, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, on the other hand, avalanche triggerings in the weak, ground-level layers continue to be possible.

Observed weather on Thursday, 18.01.2018

There has been snowfall in northern regions. The snowfall level was in low lying areas to begin with, subsequently ascended during the course of the day to nearly 1400 m. In the furthermost southern regions it was quite sunny.

Fresh snow

Since the beginning of this period of precipitation on Monday evening until Thursday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow have been registered above 1500 m:

- northern and furthermost western parts of the Lower Valais, Lötschental, Glarner Alps: 80 to 120 cm;
- remaining parts of the Alpine Ridge not including the Haslital, and in addition, the Valais, northwestern parts of Ticino, northern Grisons, northern parts of the Lower Engadine: 40 to 80 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of northern Ticino, central Grisons, remaining parts of the Lower Engadine, Jura region: 20 to 40 cm;
- Upper Engadine: 10 to 20 cm; in the furthermost southern regions it remained dry.

Temperature

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

Wind

Winds in western and northern regions were blowing at strong to storm velocity, in southern and eastern regions at strong velocity, from westerly directions.

Weather forecast through Friday, 19.01.2018

In northern regions, the snowfall is expected to continue. The snowfall level will descend down to low lying areas on Thursday night. In the furthermost southern regions it will be quite sunny.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and Friday evening, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above 1500 m:

- furthermost western part of the Lower Valais, eastern sector of the northern flank of the Alps, Prättigau, Silvretta, Samnaun: 20 to 40 cm;
- western and central sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of the Valais, remaining parts of northern and central Grisons, remaining parts of the Lower Engadine, Jura region: 10 to 20 cm;
- in other regions of Switzerland, less; in southern regions it will remain dry.

Temperature

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

Wind

Winds at high altitudes will be blowing at strong velocity from westerly directions, subsequently tapering off slightly during the course of the day. Winds in southern regions will be blowing at strong velocity from the northwest.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 19 January 2018

Outlook through Sunday, 21.01.2018

Saturday

Skies will be heavily overcast. In western and northern regions, a small amount of snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas. The strong velocity westerly winds are expected to continue. The avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly. Winter sports activities in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs require a great deal of experience in evaluating avalanche dangers on-site, as well as restraint.

Sunday

On Saturday night in western and northern regions, intensive precipitation is expected to set in, accompanied by strong westerly winds. The snowfall level will be at low lying areas to start with, subsequently ascend during the course of the day, particularly in western regions. The precise weather developments are still uncertain at this juncture. The avalanche danger levels will increase in the major areas of precipitation in the west and in the north, presumably reaching danger level 4 (high). For all backcountry freeriders and skiers, the conditions are unfavourable over widespread areas. Only in the furthermost southern regions is the avalanche situation favourable for the most part.