Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 14 March 2018

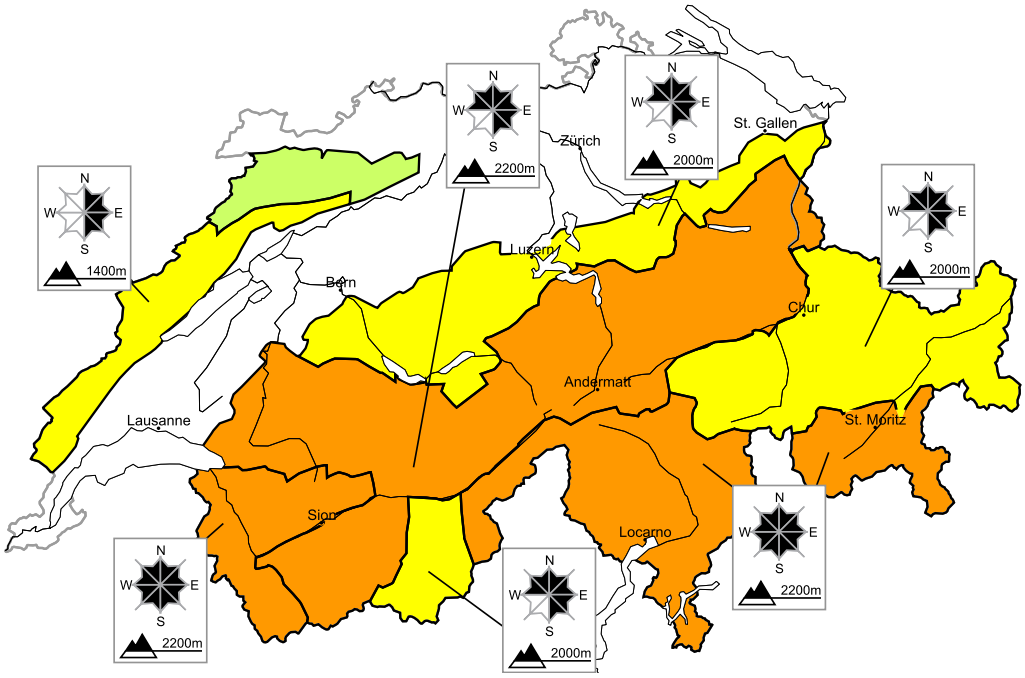
14.3.2018, 07:45

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 14.3.2018, 08:00 / Next update: 14.3.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

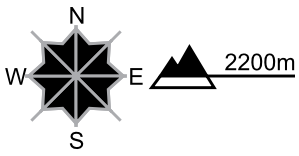
updated on 14.3.2018, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh snow and snow drift accumulations can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Avalanches can additionally in some places be released in deeper layers in particular on steep north facing slopes. Avalanches can reach dangerously large size. As the day progresses the likelihood of dry avalanches being released will increase a little. Individual natural avalanches are possible. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

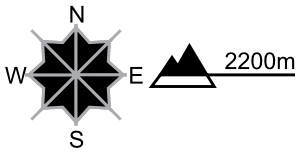
Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

On steep sunny slopes full-depth and wet avalanches are to be expected, including medium-sized ones.

region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



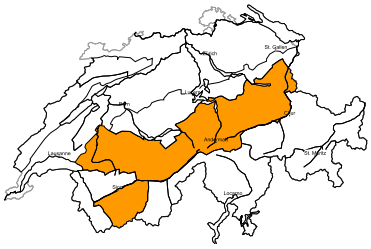
Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including medium-sized ones. As the day progresses the likelihood of dry avalanches being released will increase a little. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

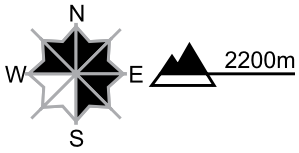
On steep sunny slopes full-depth and wet avalanches are to be expected.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



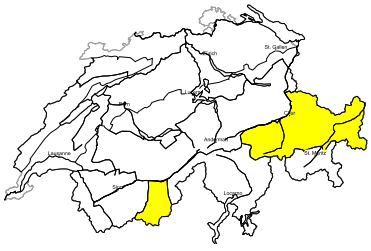
Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are prone to triggering. Single snow sport participants can release avalanches. Mostly these are small. Avalanches can additionally in some places be released in deeper layers. Caution is to be exercised in particular on steep north facing slopes. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

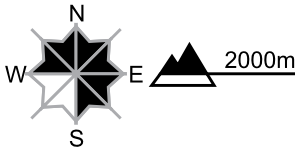
On steep sunny slopes full-depth and wet avalanches are possible.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The older snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released by people. Fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small and in some cases prone to triggering. The prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Wet avalanches as day progresses, Full-depth avalanches

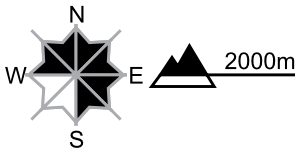
On steep sunny slopes full-depth and wet avalanches are possible.

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

region E — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



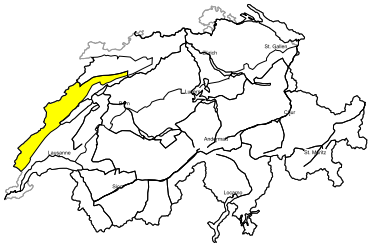
Danger description

Fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small and in some cases prone to triggering. The older snow drift accumulations can especially at their margins be released by people.
Careful route selection is recommended.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

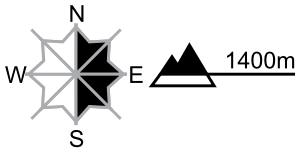
On steep sunny slopes wet snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



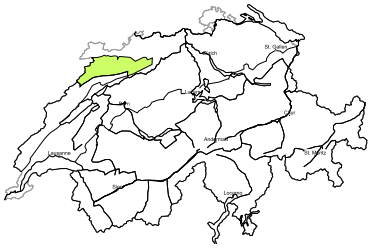
Danger description

The more recent snow drift accumulations are small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in terrain where there is a danger of falling.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Wet snow slides are possible.

region G — Level 1, low



Snow drifts

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

Wet snow slides are possible.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 13.3.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

The fresh snow and wind slab layers that formed in the south last weekend and in the west at the beginning of the week remain prone to triggering. In addition in all regions, layers that are embedded a little deeper in the snowpack are prone to triggering in some cases, in particular on north facing slopes. In many cases these avalanche prone locations are covered with snow and barely recognisable. This makes it more difficult to assess the avalanche danger.
In recent days the snowpack has become moist up to approximately 2200 m and even higher altitudes in some cases.
In the morning the surface of the snowpack will freeze to form a strong crust on steep south facing slopes below approximately 2200 m, in particular in the south. As a consequence of daytime warming and solar radiation, the stability of the near-surface layers will diminish, and the likelihood of dry and wet snow avalanches being released will increase.
Gliding avalanches can still occur below approximately 2400 m.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 13.03.2018

The north and west were very cloudy with snowfall above approximately 1200 m. The east was partly sunny at first, but increasingly cloudy in the afternoon. To the south of the main Alpine ridge it was quite sunny.

Fresh snow
In the period from Monday afternoon until Tuesday afternoon, 20 to 30 cm of snow fell in the far west. Since precipitation commenced on Saturday night, the following amounts of snow have fallen above approximately 1800 m:
- Lower Valais in the extreme west and the north, central part of the southern flank of the Alps: 30 to 50 cm
- Rest of Lower Valais, rest of the main Alpine ridge from the southern Simplon region to the Bernina Pass: 20 to 40 cm
- Rest of Valais, Vaud and Fribourg Alps, western Bernese Alps, rest of Upper Engadine: 10 to 20 cm
- Remaining regions on the northern flank of the Alps, rest of Grisons, at elevated altitudes in the Jura: 5 to 10 cm

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between -4 °C in the north and -1 °C in the south

Wind
Moderate to strong in the north and west, light to moderate in Ticino and Grisons, from the west

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 14.03.2018

On Tuesday night a little snow will fall in the north and east above approximately 1000 m. During the day, it will be mostly sunny in the west and south. The north and east will become increasingly sunny once the residual cloud has dispersed.

Fresh snow
- Northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Alps to the Alpstein region: 10 to 20 cm, but up to 30 cm in some localities
- Jura, rest of the northern flank of the Alps, Gotthard region, Lower Valais, northern Grisons, northern Lower Engadine: 5 to 10 cm
- Elsewhere: a few centimetres, but none on the southern flank of the Alps

Temperature
Increasing during the day from the west to reach between 0 °C in the west and -3 °C in the south at midday at 2000 m

Wind
- In the first half of the night, moderate to strong from the west to northwest
- Veering southwesterly thereafter, and light to moderate during the day

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 14 March 2018

Outlook through Friday, 16.03.2018

Thursday

The southern flank of the Alps will be very cloudy, and 10 to 30 cm of snow will fall above approximately 1000 m. A foehn wind will develop in the north. As the day progresses, dense cloud will build up quickly from the southwest and a little snow will fall above approximately 1400 m. In the regions exposed to the foehn it will be partly sunny. The avalanche danger will increase in the south as a consequence of fresh snow, but will not change significantly in the north. Gliding avalanches can still occur.

Friday

It will be cloudy with bright intervals in the north and light snow showers above approximately 1200 m in the west and south. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease. Gliding avalanches can still occur.