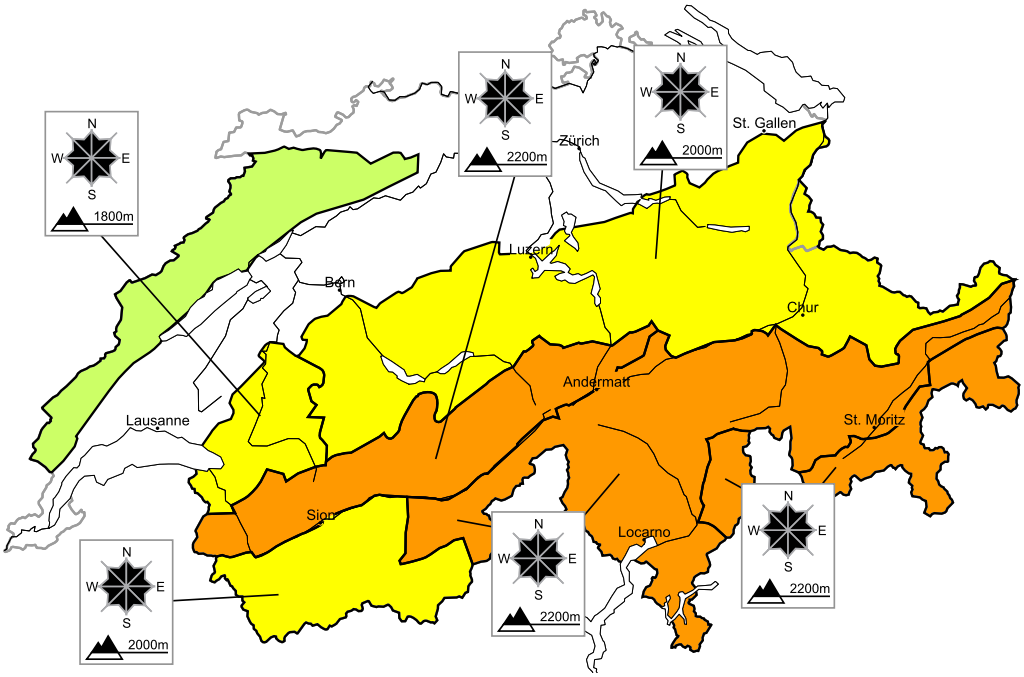
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 23.3.2018, 08:00 / Next update: 23.3.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

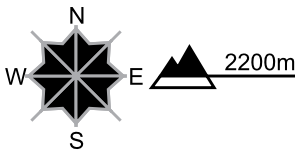
updated on 23.3.2018, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and snow drift accumulations of the last few days are poorly bonded with the old snowpack. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In particular on north and east facing slopes these can penetrate even deep layers and reach a dangerous size. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

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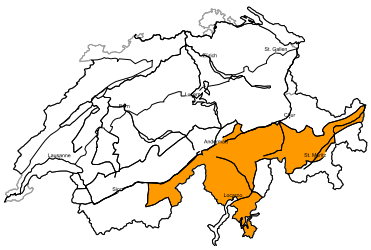
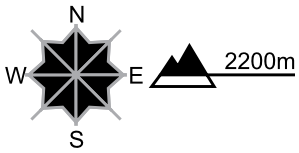
region B — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

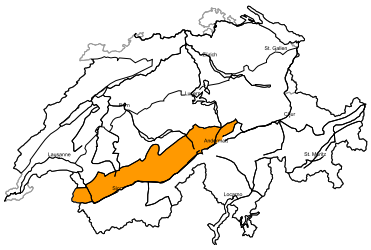
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

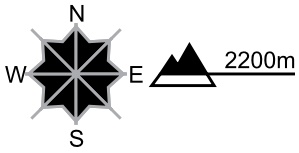
As a consequence of the northeasterly wind snow drift accumulations have formed. These can especially at their margins be released by a single winter sport participant. The prevalence of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude.
In particular in little used backcountry terrain avalanches can be triggered in the old snow and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
The current avalanche situation calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The somewhat older snow drift accumulations can in some cases be released easily especially at their margins. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude.

Full-depth avalanches

Below approximately 2400 m individual full-depth avalanches are possible, including quite large ones. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

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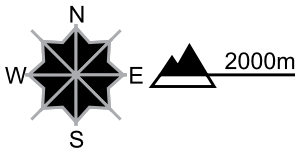
region D — Level 2, moderate

Old snow, snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of the northerly wind clearly visible snow drift accumulations have formed. These are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more widespread and the danger is level 3 (considerable).
Avalanches can additionally be released in the weakly bonded old snow in very isolated cases. Caution is to be exercised in particular on steep, little used north facing slopes. These avalanche prone locations are rare but barely recognisable. Defensive route selection is advisable.

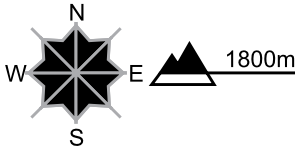
Full-depth avalanches

Below approximately 2400 m individual full-depth avalanches are possible, including quite large ones. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts

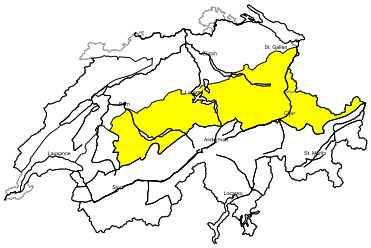
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

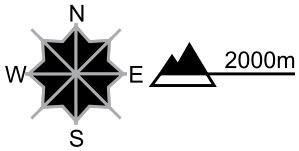
Somewhat older snow drift accumulations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. These are in some cases large. They can be released, especially at their margins,. The snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in pass areas. They are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. At elevated altitudes avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and the danger is slightly greater. The fresh snow drift accumulations are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Careful route selection is recommended.

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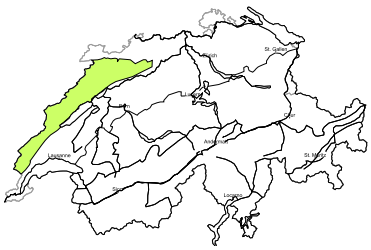
region G

Level 1, low



Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 22.3.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

The snowdrift accumulations which have been generated over the last few days by northerly-to-northeasterly winds which were often blowing at strong velocity are still prone to triggering in some places.
Inside the uppermost meter of the snow cover in the Valais, in the Ticino and in Grisons more than anywhere else, older weak layers are still prone to triggering in isolated cases. These avalanche prone locations are found particularly on north-facing slopes which have been little skied. They are nearly impossible to recognize, which makes the evaluation of avalanche danger exceedingly difficult.
Gliding avalanches continue to be possible in isolated cases. Due to the above-average snow depths, gliding avalanches can grow to dangerously large size.

Observed weather on Thursday, 22.03.2018

On Wednesday evening in northern regions, there was a small amount of additional snowfall from region to region. Subsequently, skies cleared and on Thursday, following clear skies during the night, it was sunny in all regions of Switzerland to start with. During the afternoon, cloud cover moved in rapidly from the north and there was a small amount of snowfall in the Jura region.

Fresh snow

On the northern flank of the Alps and from place to place in the Jura region, only a few centimeters down to low lying areas.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -6 °C in northern regions and -2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will frequently be blowing at moderate strength, intermittently also at stronger velocities on the Main Alpine Ridge from the Simplon region to the Bernina, from northerly to northeasterly directions.

Weather forecast through Friday, 23.03.2018

On Thursday night, skies will be overcast and a small amount of snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas in northern regions more than anywhere else. In the morning hours of Friday in western regions and in general in high alpine regions, it will be sunny. In eastern regions the snowfall will gradually come to an end, but bright intervals are not expected before afternoon. South of the Main Alpine Ridge it will be sunny.

Fresh snow

- Northern Alpine Ridge east of Meiringen, northern and central Grisons: 5 to 10 cm;
- In the other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimeters over widespread areas; in southern regions it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m in western and in southern regions -8 °C; in eastern regions -12 °C.

Wind

- Winds at high altitudes will be blowing at moderate strength, on the Main Alpine Ridge at strong to storm-velocity during the night, subsequently slackening off during the daytime;
- in southern regions, a strong-velocity northerly foehn wind will be blowing, then slacken off during the course of the day.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 23 March 2018

Outlook through Sunday, 25.03.2018

Saturday

In northern regions it will be predominantly sunny, with a slight tendency towards foehn wind, and significantly milder. On the southern flank of the Alps, skies will be overcast during the early morning hours, subsequently it will turn increasingly sunny. The danger of dry-snow avalanches is not expected to change significantly. As a result of higher temperatures in northern regions, in the Valais and in Grisons, superficial wet-snow avalanches can be expected on sunny slopes during the course of the day.

Sunday

In northern regions, skies will be variably cloudy accompanied by sunny intervals towards the eastern regions more than anywhere else. During the afternoon in western regions, a small amount of precipitation is anticipated. In Grisons and in southern regions, it will be quite sunny. The danger of dry-snow avalanches is not expected to change significantly. Isolated wet-snow avalanches continue to be possible.