Considerable danger of dry and wet avalanches will be encountered over a wide area

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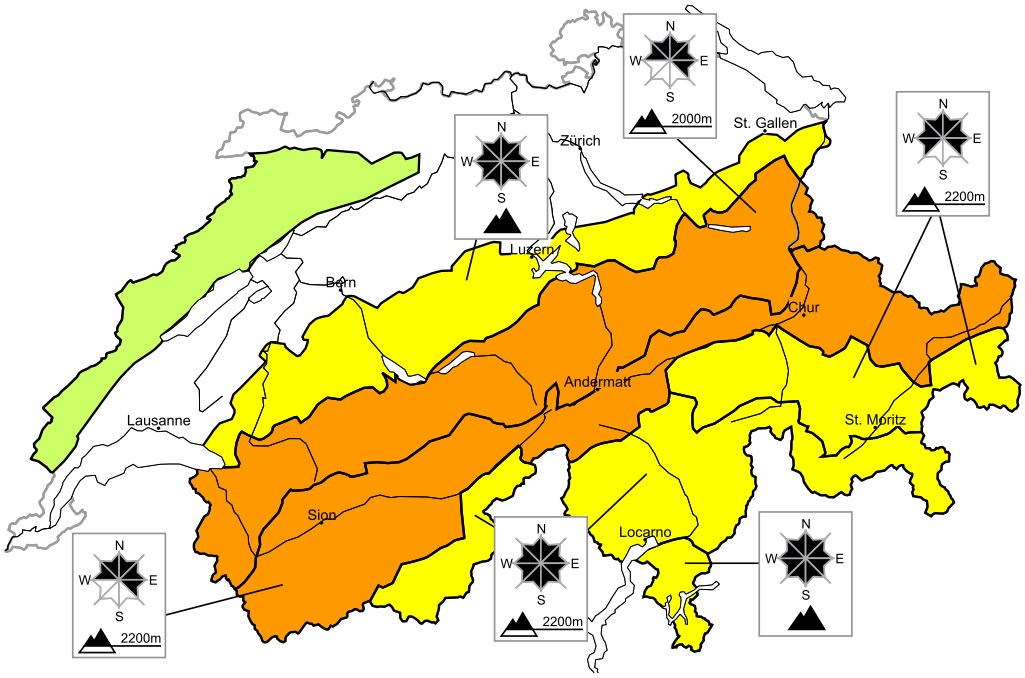
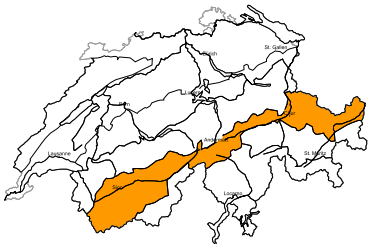
Avalanche danger

updated on 30.3.2018, 08:00

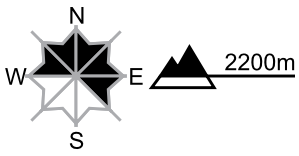


region A | **Level 3, considerable**



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released easily or naturally. As the day progresses the previously small snow drift accumulations will increase in size. Avalanches can additionally in isolated cases be released in deeper layers. This applies in particular on very steep north facing slopes in little used backcountry terrain. Such avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable. Avalanches can reach medium size in isolated cases. Experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is required.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

More wet avalanches are possible.
Below approximately 2600 m full-depth avalanches are possible. These can reach dangerously large size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

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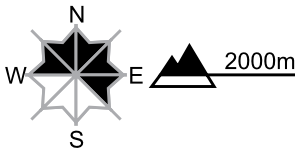
region B — Level 3, considerable

Snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations can be released by a single winter sport participant. As the day progresses the snow drift accumulations will increase in size. Natural avalanches are possible in isolated cases. Avalanches can reach medium size in isolated cases. Experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is required.

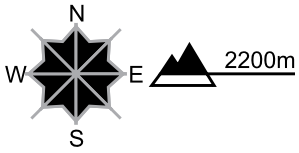
Wet and full-depth avalanches

More wet avalanches are possible.
Below approximately 2400 m full-depth avalanches are possible. These can reach dangerously large size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As the day progresses as a consequence of fresh snow and wind there will be a significant increase in the avalanche danger to level 3 (considerable). Fresh snow drift accumulations can be released easily. Avalanches can additionally in isolated cases be released in deeper layers. This applies in particular on very steep north facing slopes in little used backcountry terrain. Such avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable. Experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is recommended.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

Below approximately 2600 m full-depth avalanches are to be expected. These can reach dangerously large size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible. At intermediate altitudes more frequent wet snow slides and avalanches are to be expected as a consequence of the rain. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered, this applies in the afternoon.

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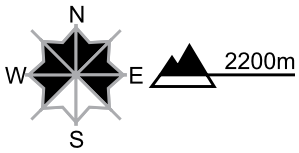
region D — Level 2, moderate

Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



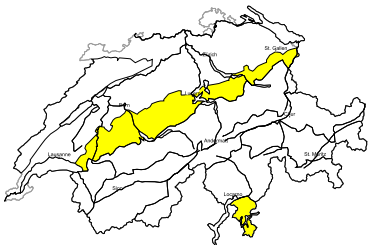
Danger description

Fresh snow drift accumulations are mostly small but can in some cases be released easily. They are to be found in particular adjacent to the ridge line and in gullies and bowls. As the day progresses as a consequence of the strong southerly wind there will be only a slight increase in the avalanche danger.
Avalanches can additionally in isolated cases be released in deeper layers. This applies in particular on very steep north facing slopes in little used backcountry terrain. Such avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable.
Careful route selection is important.

Full-depth avalanches

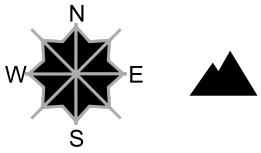
Below approximately 2400 m individual full-depth avalanches are possible. These can reach dangerously large size. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region E — Level 2, moderate



Wet and full-depth avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



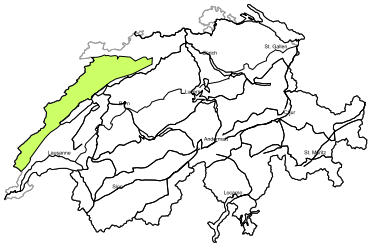
Danger description

Full-depth and wet avalanches are possible. These can reach medium size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

Snow drifts

High altitudes: The fresh and somewhat older snow drift accumulations are mostly small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. The snow drift accumulations are to be avoided in steep terrain.

region F — Level 1, low



Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Even a small avalanche can sweep snow sport participants along and give rise to falls.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 29.3.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

As a consequence of strong to storm-strength southerly winds, snowdrift accumulations are being generated, on shady slopes more than anywhere else, which are prone to triggering. As a result of the fresh snow in southern regions, these drifted masses currently constitute the largest amounts of fresh snow. More deeply embedded, weaker layers of snow are evident in the uppermost meter of the snow cover in the Valais and in Grisons more than anywhere else. In the regions where there is not much snow, namely in central and eastern Ticino over central Grisons into the Engadine and southwards therefrom, also the layers of the snowpack nearest to the ground are weak and unconsolidated in some places and thus, capable of being swept along by avalanches which fracture. This is particularly the case on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes.
As a result of the milder temperatures and, in southern regions, of the rainfall, wet-snow and gliding avalanches continue to be expected. Due to the inordinate snow depths, such avalanches can grow to dangerously large size.

Observed weather on Thursday, 29.03.2018

On Wednesday night there was snowfall registered over widespread areas. The snowfall level descended from approximately 1800 m down to approximately 1200 m by early morning in northern regions, and down to 1600 m in southern regions. During the daytime, skies were predominantly overcast, accompanied by snow showers in eastern and southern regions, as well as in the Jura, more than anywhere else.

Fresh snow

Between Wednesday evening and Thursday afternoon on the northern flank of the Alps, in the Lower Valais, in the Gotthard region, in northern Grisons and in Samnaun, there was 10 to 20 cm of snowfall registered over widespread areas, as much as 30 cm from place to place; in other regions, there was less. Thus, between Monday and Thursday above approximately 2000 m the following overall amounts of fresh snow were registered:

- furthermost western part of Lower Valais, northern Valais, northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Oberland as far as Liechtenstein: 30 to 50 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of the Valais and of the Gotthard region, northern Grisons, Silvretta: 15 to 30 cm;
- in other regions of Switzerland, 5 to 15 cm; in the furthermost southern regions it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -3 °C in northern regions and -1 °C in the other regions of Switzerland.

Wind

Winds were westerly,

- during the night blowing at moderate strength, also reaching strong velocity in the Jura region;
- during the daytime blowing at light to moderate strength.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 30 March 2018

Weather forecast through Friday, 30.03.2018

On Thursday night in southern regions, precipitation is expected to set in, which during the afternoon on Good Friday will become intensive. The snowfall level will be at 1400 to 1900 m. North of the Main Alpine Ridge it will be partly sunny, accompanied by cloudbanks. During the afternoon, skies will turn increasingly cloudy from the west, in some places light precipitation is anticipated. The snowfall level will descend from 1400 down to 1000 m.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and the evening of Good Friday, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above approximately 2000 m:

- central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, Main Alpine Ridge on the Italian border and from the Rheinwald region into the Bernina region: 15 to 30 cm; in northwestern Ticino as much as 40 cm;
- Jura region, remaining parts of the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom, Aletsch region, Gotthard region, Upper Engadine: 5 to 15 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimeters; or else it will remain dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +1 °C in northern regions and -2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

At high altitudes, a strong southerly-to-southwesterly wind will be blowing, subsequently intensifying and reaching storm strength during the course of the day. In the foehn-influenced regions of the north, strong foehn winds will arise during the night.

Outlook through Sunday, 01.04.2018

Saturday

On Friday night in southern regions, snowfall will set in which is expected to be intensive and persistent. The snowfall level will descend to approximately 1200 m. During the daytime on Holy Saturday, the snowfall will come to an end and isolated bright intervals are anticipated. Also north of the Main Alpine Ridge, snowfall is expected over widespread areas above approximately 1000 m. Most of the snowfall is anticipated in the region from the Bernese Oberland into the Glarner Alps. On Friday night in the major areas of precipitation of the south, danger level 4 ("high") will presumably be reached. Also in the regions bordering to the north - the Bernese Oberland, central and eastern Switzerland, and Grisons - danger level 4 ("high") could be reached. In the other regions of Switzerland, the danger of dry-snow avalanches will also increase as a consequence of the fresh fallen snow. Wet-snow and gliding avalanches continue to be expected at any time in all regions.

Sunday

On Saturday night in northern regions, snowfall is anticipated above approximately 1000 m. During the daytime on Easter Sunday, skies will be variably cloudy, accompanied by showers and bright intervals. South of the Main Alpine Ridge it will be quite sunny as a result of the northerly winds. The avalanche danger levels will presumably decrease somewhat. For backcountry skiers and freeriders, the conditions are expected to remain critical.