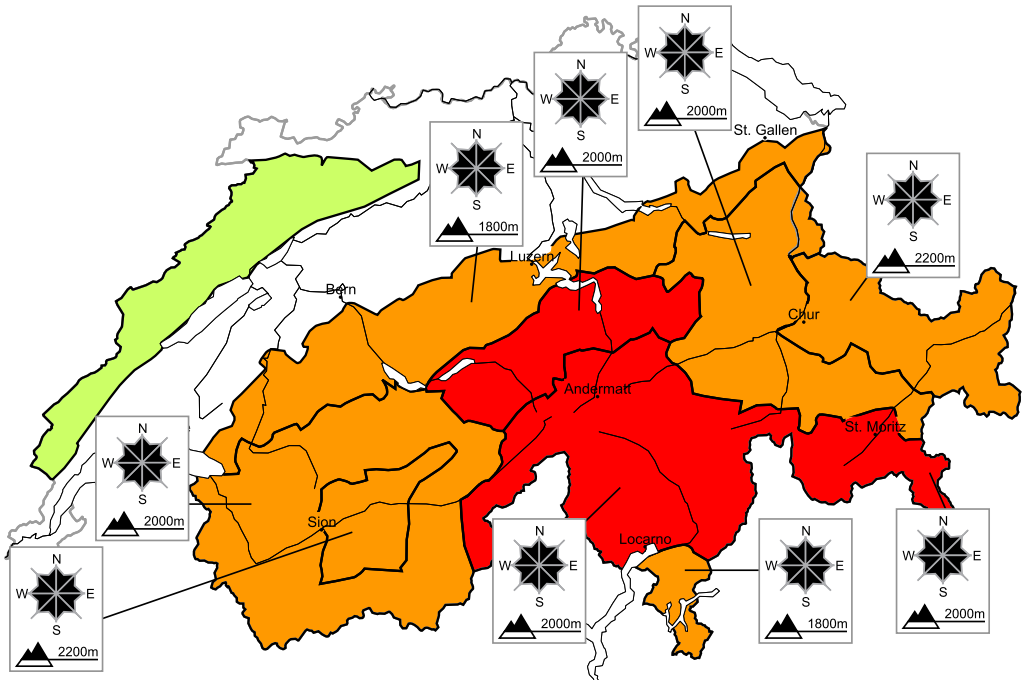
For those venturing off piste a high avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 31.3.2018, 08:00 / Next update: 31.3.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

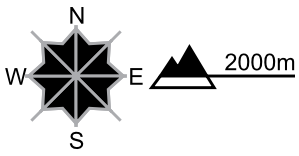
updated on 31.3.2018, 08:00



region A — Level 4, high

Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

A lot more fresh snow than expected: Numerous natural dry avalanches are to be expected, including large ones in isolated cases. They can release the weakly bonded old snow as well and can reach as far as the valley bottom. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered. Temporary safety measures are to be reviewed. The conditions are unfavourable for snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

At intermediate altitudes more full-depth and wet avalanches are possible. Slides are to be expected on cut slopes. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

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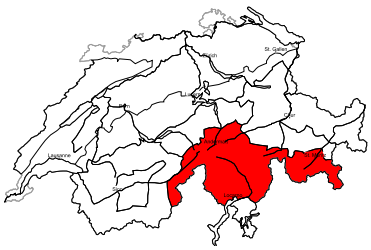
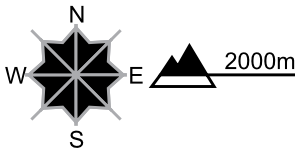
region B — Level 4, high



Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



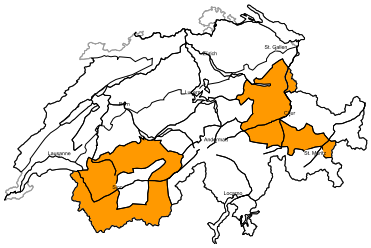
Danger description

Numerous natural dry avalanches are to be expected, in particular medium-sized ones. They can release the weakly bonded old snow as well and reach large size in some cases. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered. Temporary safety measures are to remain in place. The conditions are unfavourable for snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

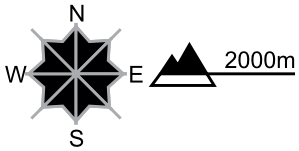
At intermediate altitudes more full-depth and wet avalanches are possible. Slides are to be expected on cut slopes. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



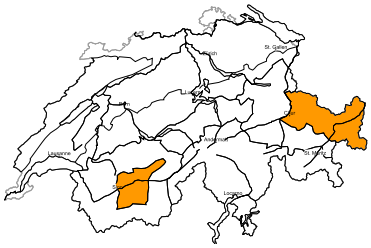
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind easily released snow drift accumulations have formed. Small and medium-sized natural avalanches are possible as the snowfall becomes more intense. Avalanches can additionally in isolated cases be released in deeper layers also. Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Full-depth avalanches

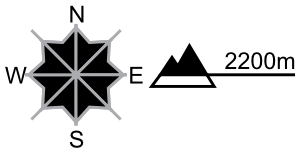
Below approximately 2600 m full-depth avalanches are possible. These can reach dangerously large size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region D — Level 3, considerable



Snow drifts, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow drift accumulations can be released easily or naturally. 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.

Full-depth avalanches

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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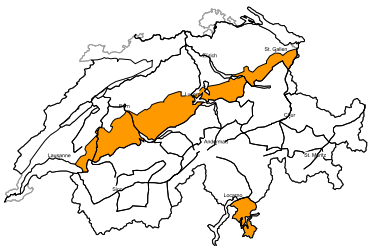
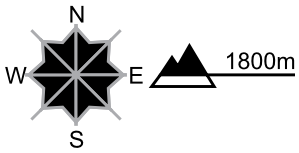
region E — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

Avalanche prone locations



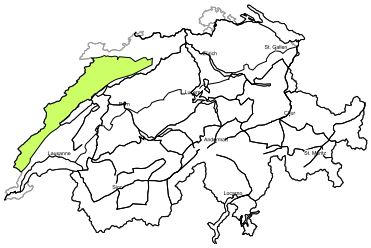
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and wind snow drift accumulations have formed. These are mostly small but can be released easily. 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.

Full-depth avalanches

More full-depth avalanches are possible. These can reach medium size in isolated cases. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

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 30.3.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of fresh snow and southerly winds blowing intermittently at strong-velocity, snowdrift accumulations were generated on Friday which are prone to triggering. These drifted masses are expected to continue to grow in size and spread during the daytime on Saturday, and in the major areas of precipitation they will become quite large-sized. As a consequence of intensive precipitation in southern regions, increasingly frequent naturally triggered avalanches can be expected during the nighttime hours.
More deeply embedded, weakened layers inside the snow cover are also evident in the uppermost meter of the snowpack in the Valais and in Grisons more than anywhere else. In the regions where there is far less snow, namely, from central and eastern Ticino over central Grisons and into the Engadine and southwards therefrom, there are also layers which are only weakly consolidated in places near to ground level. Avalanches which release can sweep these layers away. This is particularly the case on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes.
In southern regions as a consequence of the rainfall, wet-snow avalanches can be expected particularly during the nocturnal hours on Friday. Gliding avalanches continue to be possible in all regions at any time. Due to the extraordinary snow depths, such releases can grow to dangerously large size.

Observed weather on Friday, 30.03.2018

On Thursday night in southern regions, there was snowfall which fell as showers above approximately 1600 m. During the daytime on Friday the snowfall became stronger. In northern regions and in the Valais, it was partly sunny, accompanied by cloudbanks, subsequently skies became increasingly overcast from the west.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday afternoon and Friday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered above approximately 2000 m:
· southern flank of the Alps not including southern Simplon region, Upper Engadine: 15 to 30 cm;
· in other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimeters; or else it remained dry.

Temperature

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

Wind

Winds were blowing from southerly directions,
· during the night at light to moderate strength;
· intensifying during the course of the morning, and in general at high altitudes, reaching moderate to strong velocity; subsequently reaching storm strength during the afternoon;
· in the foehn-exposed regions of the north, a moderate-to-strong velocity foehn wind was blowing.

Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 31 March 2018

Weather forecast through Saturday, 31.03.2018

On Friday night in southern regions, precipitation is anticipated which will be both persistent and intensive. During the daytime on Holy Saturday, the precipitation will come to an end and isolated bright intervals are expected. The snowfall level will be at 1500 to 1900 m during the night, then descend to approximately 1200 m in the early morning hours.
North of the Main Alpine Ridge, precipitation is expected to set in over widespread areas during the night which will be heaviest in the furthermost western parts of the Lower Valais and in the eastern Bernese Alps as far as the Glarner Alps. The snowfall level will descend from 1400 m down to approximately 1000 m.

Fresh snow

Between afternoon on Good Friday and afternoon on Holy Saturday, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above approximately 2000 m:

- southern flank of the Alps not including Val Müstair, as well as the Gotthard region: 50 to 80 cm; in northwestern Ticino as much as 100 cm from place to place;
- remaining parts of the Main Alpine Ridge from the Matterhorn into the Upper Engadine, furthermost western part of the Lower Valais, remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Alps into the Glarner Alps: 30 to 50 cm;
- in other regions of Switzerland, 15 to 30 cm over widespread areas; in central Valais and in the Lower Engadine, less.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -5 °C in northern regions and -2 °C in southern regions.

Wind

- Winds to start with will be southerly, during the night blowing at strong velocity at high altitudes, subsequently in the early morning hours slackening off and shifting to northwesterly;
- during the daytime winds will be northwesterly, blowing at moderate strength in the morning, reaching strong velocity in the afternoon and in general at high altitude.

Outlook through Monday, 02.04.2018

Sunday

On Saturday night in northern and in western regions, snowfall is anticipated above approximately 1000 m. During the daytime hours 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 consequence of the northerly winds. The avalanche danger levels are expected to decrease in southern regions more than anywhere else. Gliding avalanches continue to be possible.

Monday

On Easter Monday it will presumably be quite sunny accompanied by cloudbanks. In northern regions, foehn winds will come up; and in southern regions, skies will become increasingly overcast during the course of the day. The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to diminish. The danger of wet-snow avalanches is expected to increase during the course fo the day. Gliding avalanches continue to be possible at any time.