Avalanche bulletin for Tuesday, 15 January 2019

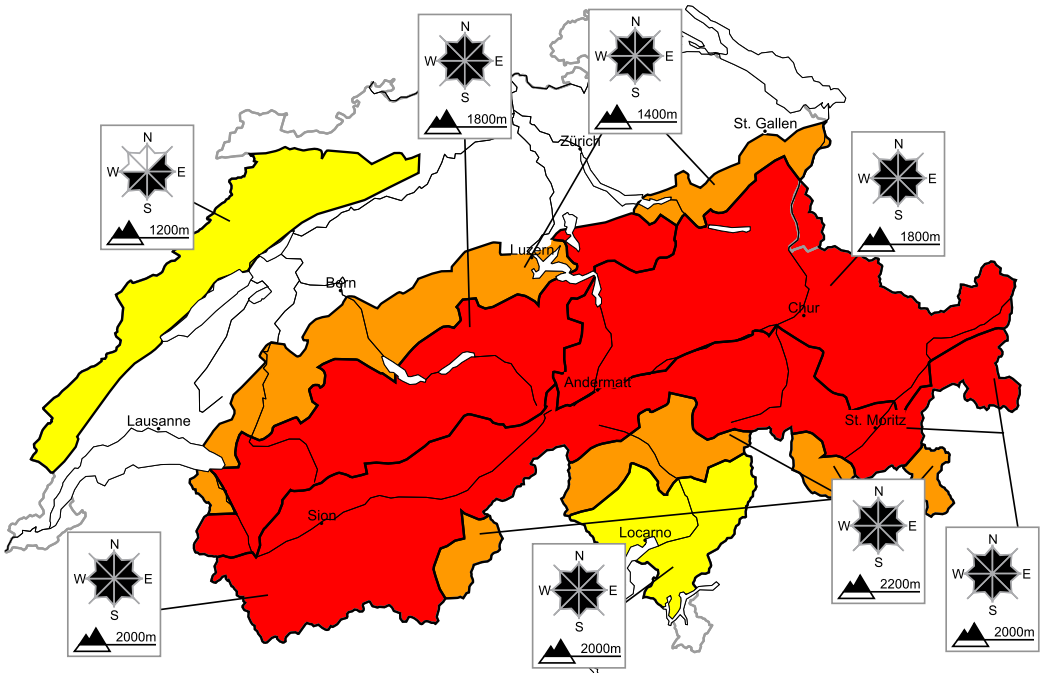
15.1.2019, 07:56

High avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area. The conditions are very critical for winter sport activities outside marked and open pistes

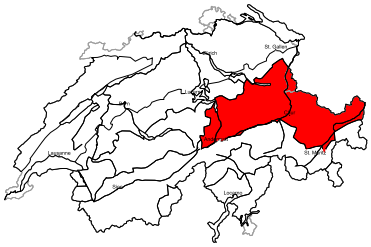
Edition: 15.1.2019, 08:00 / Next update: 15.1.2019, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 15.1.2019, 08:00

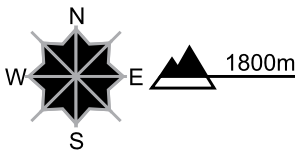


region A — Level 4, high



Fresh snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs are very prone to triggering. For this reason the snowpack is unstable. Once the snowfall has ended, the natural avalanche activity will appreciably decrease. Individual large to very large avalanches are however still possible. They can reach the valleys. Buildings and transportation routes can be endangered in some cases.
The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes remain very dangerous.

Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes occasionally large gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2000 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

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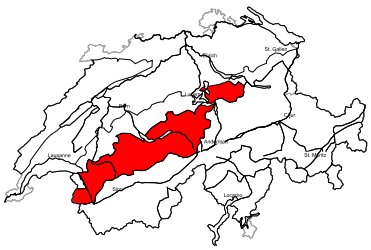
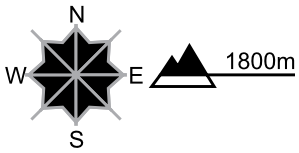
region B — Level 4, high



Fresh snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



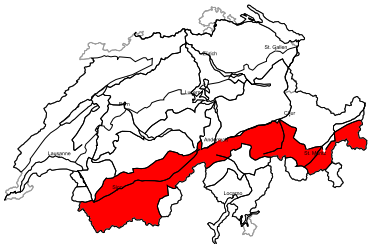
Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs are very prone to triggering. Avalanches can also be triggered in the old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including dangerously large ones. Remotely triggered and natural avalanches are possible. The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes are very critical.
Once the snowfall has ended, the natural avalanche activity will appreciably decrease. Individual large natural avalanches are however still possible. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

Gliding avalanches

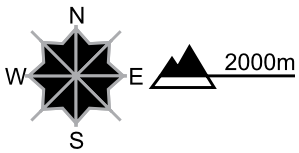
On steep grassy slopes gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2000 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region C — Level 4, high



Fresh snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs are very prone to triggering. Avalanches can also be triggered in the old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including dangerously large ones. Remotely triggered and natural avalanches are possible. The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes are very critical.
Once the snowfall has ended, the natural avalanche activity will appreciably decrease. Individual large natural avalanches are however still possible. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2000 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

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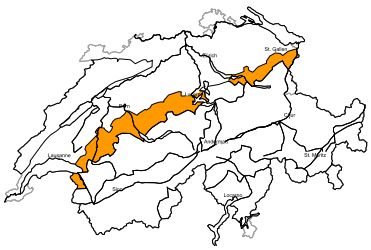
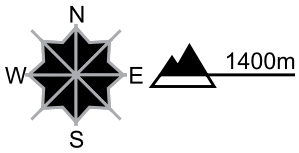
region D — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



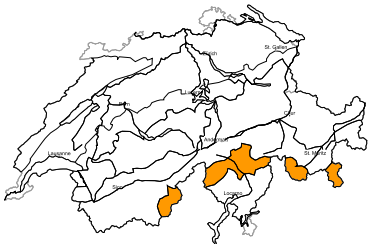
Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs are very prone to triggering. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including dangerously large ones. Avalanches can be released in the old snowpack also. The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes are critical. Whumpfing sounds indicate the danger.

Gliding avalanches

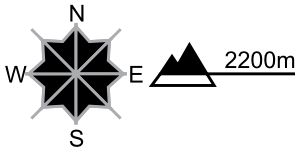
On steep grassy slopes small and medium-sized gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2000 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region E — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs

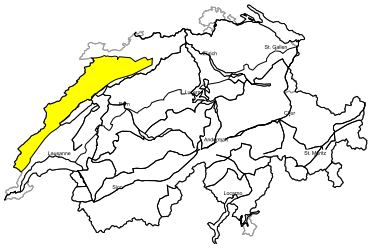
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

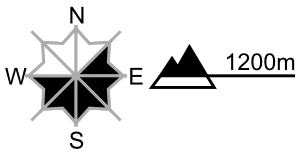
Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain, also at a distance from ridgelines. They are in some cases prone to triggering. The wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



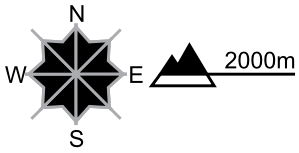
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong northwesterly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs formed in particular in gullies and bowls and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region G — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised as well in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 14.1.2019, 17:00

Snowpack

The fresh snow and wind slab layers are very deep and in many cases unstable. Avalanches can be triggered within these layers or at interfaces between them and the old snowpack. In particular in the west, in Valais and in the inneralpine regions of Grisons, avalanches can also be triggered in weak old layers a little deeper in the snowpack. On the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Oberland to Liechtenstein, and in northern Upper Valais, northern Grisons and northern Lower Engadine, after last week's abundant snowfall a lot of snow is already lying even at intermediate altitudes. Avalanches that are released at higher altitudes can pick up a lot of snow as they descend towards the valley, and travel very large distances. When the snowfall ceases on Monday night, avalanche activity will have peaked. Individual very large or extremely large natural avalanches can, however, still occur.
On steep grassy slopes, gliding avalanches are still to be expected at low and intermediate altitudes. In the regions with a lot of snow on the northern flank of the Alps and in northern Grisons, these can reach a large size.

Observed weather on Monday, 14.01.2019

A strong northwesterly front gave rise to further persistent and heavy snowfall. The snowfall level rose during the night to 1800 m in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and to approximately 1200 m elsewhere. It dropped to low altitudes as the day progressed. Sotto Ceneri remained dry and was quite sunny.

Fresh snow

In the period from the start of precipitation on Saturday night until Monday afternoon, the following amounts of snow fell above approximately 1500 m:

- Northern Alpine ridge from the Wildhorn to Liechtenstein, Goms, northern Grisons and Lower Engadine: 70 to 90 cm, but up to 130 cm from Goms via the Urn Alps to the Glarus Alps
- Central and eastern Prealps, central Grisons, some regions of southern Valais: 50 to 70 cm
- Western Prealps, Chablais, Vaud and Fribourg Alps, extreme west of Lower Valais, Visp valleys, southern Simplon region, Bedretto, Upper Valle Maggia, main Alpine ridge from the Lukmanier Pass to the Bernina region, Val Müstair: 30 to 50 cm
- Jura: 20 to 40 cm
- Rest of Ticino, Moesano, Val Bregaglia, Val Poschiavo: approximately 15 cm, but mostly dry in Sotto Ceneri

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: about -7 °C in the north and -3 °C in the south

Wind

- Jura, northern Alpine ridge, Valais, Grisons: storm force during the night, strong during the day, from the northwest
- Northern Prealps: moderate to strong westerly
- Ticino: moderate northwesterly

Weather forecast through Tuesday, 15.01.2019

The snowfall will cease during the night. During the day it will be sunny in the west and south. It will initially remain cloudy in the east before becoming sunny there as well as the day progresses.

Fresh snow

By the morning the following additional amounts of snow will fall above approximately 1000 m:

- Eastern Bernese Alps, Urn and Glarus Alps: 20 to 40 cm
- Rest of the northern flank of the Alps, northern Upper Valais, Gotthard region, northern and central Grisons, Engadine, Val Müstair: 10 to 20 cm
- Other regions: 5 to 10 cm, but remaining mostly dry in central and southern Ticino

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: between -4 °C in the west and south, and -8 °C in the northeast

Wind

The northwesterly wind will remain strong and even reach storm force at elevated altitudes; it will ease gradually during the day

Avalanche bulletin for Tuesday, 15 January 2019

Outlook through Thursday, 17.01.2019

Wednesday will be mostly sunny in the mountains. On Thursday some snow will arrive from the west above 800 m as the day progresses. It will remain quite sunny in the south. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease. Gliding avalanches are still to be expected.