Fresh wind slabs require caution

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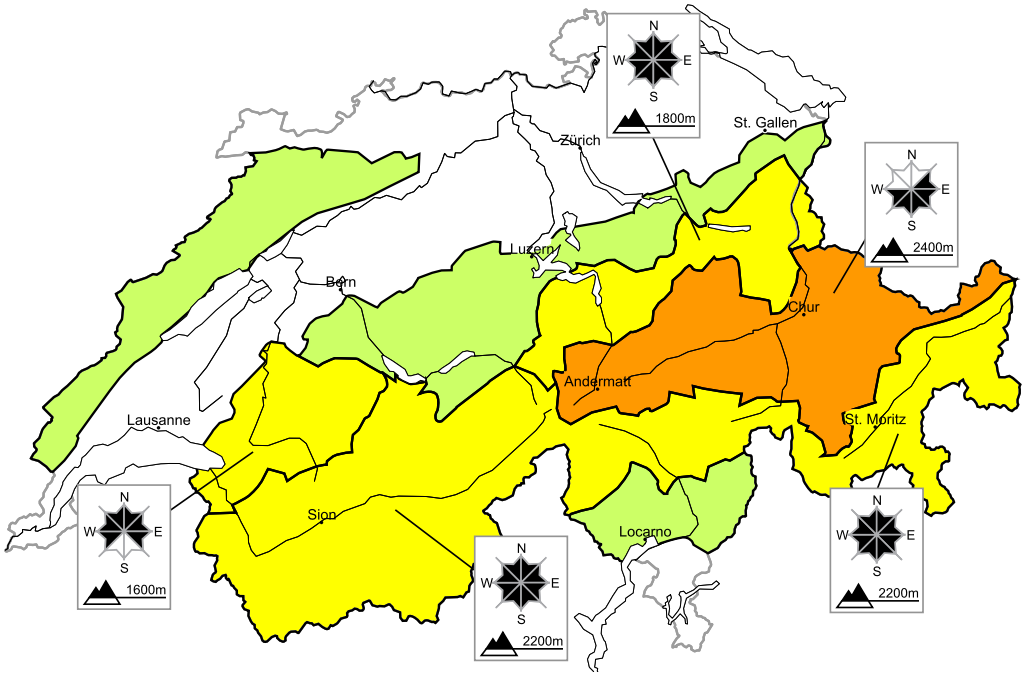
Avalanche danger

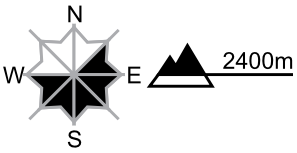
updated on 26.1.2019, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a strong northerly wind, large surface-area wind slabs formed. These can be released very easily. The wind slabs are to be bypassed in steep terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for meticulous route selection.

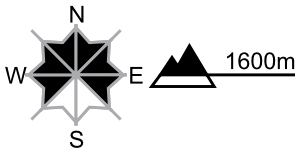
Gliding avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region B — Level 2, moderate

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanche prone weak layers exist deep in the snowpack. Avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on rather lightly snow-covered shady slopes in areas close to the tree line. Avalanches can reach dangerously large size.
Meticulous route selection is required.

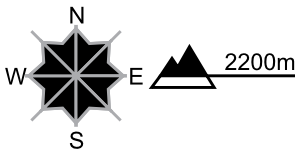
Gliding avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a strong northerly wind, mostly small wind slabs formed. These can be released very easily. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection. The wind slabs are to be bypassed in steep terrain.

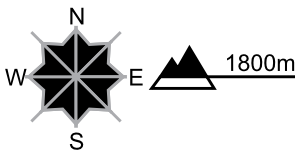
Gliding avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region D — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a moderate northwesterly wind, mostly small wind slabs formed. These can be released very easily. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection. The wind slabs are to be bypassed in steep terrain.

Gliding avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

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region E — Level 1, low

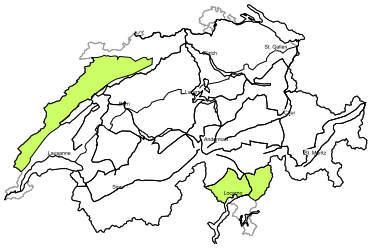
Dry avalanches

Individual avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Caution is to be exercised in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow above approximately 2000 m.
The fresh wind slabs are to be avoided in terrain where there is a danger of falling.

Gliding avalanches

In particular on very steep sunny slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2400 m. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region F — Level 1, low



Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on extremely steep slopes. The small wind slabs are to be avoided in terrain where there is a danger of falling.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 25.1.2019, 17:00

Snowpack

Increasingly strong westerly to northwesterly winds are transporting the loosely-bonded old snow and in northern regions also the fresh snow. The snowdrift accumulations are frequently being deposited on top of soft, weak layers. Easily triggered snowdrift accumulations are thereby generated.
Otherwise the snowpack layering in the regions of the north and the east where snowfall has been heaviest is favourable. More deeply embedded weak layers are generally well covered over with thick layers of fresher snow and are no longer likely to trigger. The least favourable snow structure of all is found in the Vaud and Fribourg Alps, as well as in the bordering regions of the Bernese Oberland near the tree line. There, avalanches can still be triggered in the deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack and grow to dangerously large size. This is also true of the remaining parts of the western sector of the northern flank of the Alps, of southern Valais and of central and southern Grisons, although in those regions it occurs far more seldom.
Below 2200 to 2500 m, glide-snow avalanches are possible, particularly on very steep south-facing slopes. In the regions of the north and the east where snowfall has been heaviest, these can in isolated cases grow to large size. Numerous glide cracks in the snowpack surface are open. The activity of glide-snow avalanches, however, has been reduced greatly and is currently minor.

Observed weather on Friday, 25.01.2019

In the mountains it was predominantly sunny above the high fog.

Fresh snow

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Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -12 °C in northern regions and -7 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds were northerly,
· on the Main Alpine Ridge from the Simplon into the Bernina region blowing at moderate to strong velocity;
· in the other regions, blowing predominantly at light strength, increasingly at moderate velocity at high altitudes.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 26.01.2019

In the northern regions, skies will be variably cloud to heavily overcast, and a small amount of snowfall is expected. Particularly in the Valais, bright intervals are anticipated during the course of the day. In the southern regions, it will be mostly sunny. For a short interim it will not be as cold.

Fresh snow

The snowfall level will ascend to nearly 1000 m. The following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated:
· central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, Prättigau: 5 to 10 cm;
· remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of northern and central Grisons, Engadine: only a few centimetres;
· in the other regions of Switzerland, mostly dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -4 °C in northern regions and 0 °C in southern regions.

Wind

Winds will be westerly to northwesterly,
· in eastern regions blowing at moderate to strong velocity at high altitudes;
· in western regions blowing at moderate strength;
· in southern regions blowing at strong to storm velocity during the night, subsequently slackening off.

Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 26 January 2019

Outlook through Monday, 28.01.2019

On both days, skies in northern regions will be heavily overcast and snowfall is expected, presumably more on Monday than on Sunday. All in all, 30 to 50 cm of fresh snow is possible in western regions and on the northern flank of the Alps. In the southern regions, skies will be heavily overcast on Sunday, on Monday it will be predominantly sunny. The avalanche danger will increase significantly in the western regions and on the northern flank of the Alps more than anywhere else.