Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 28 January 2019

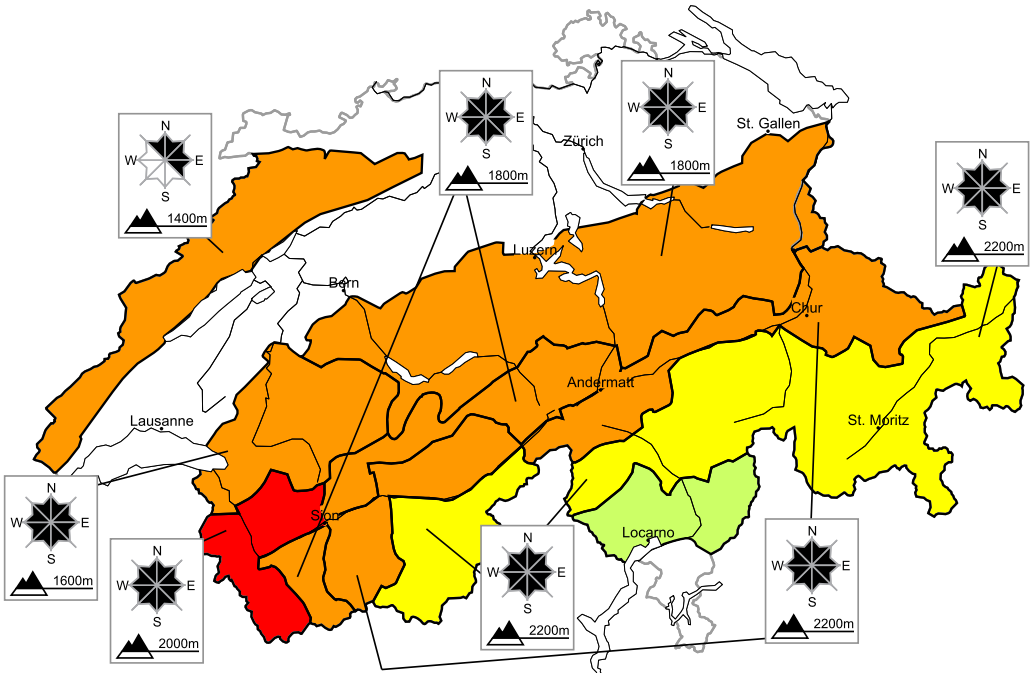
28.1.2019, 07:44

Outside marked and open pistes a critical avalanche situation will be encountered over a wide area. In the west a high avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

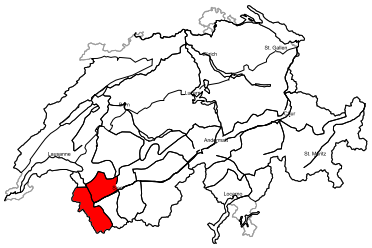
Edition: 28.1.2019, 08:00 / Next update: 28.1.2019, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 28.1.2019, 08:00

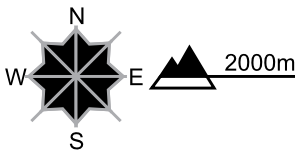


region A — Level 4, high



Fresh snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The danger exists in particular in alpine snow sports terrain. Much of the fresh and wind-drifted snow are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches in many places. Numerous medium-sized to large natural avalanches are to be expected. Remotely triggered avalanches are to be expected. Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for great caution and restraint.

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

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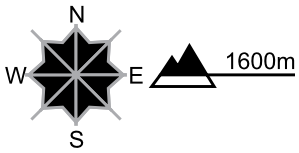
region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations

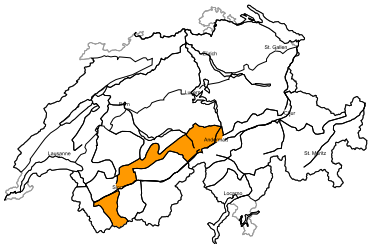


Danger description

Much of the fresh and wind-drifted snow are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Natural avalanches are to be expected, in particular medium-sized ones. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible.

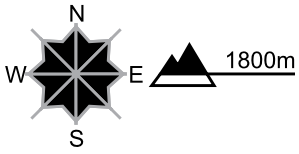
In isolated cases avalanches can penetrate deep layers and reach dangerously large size. This applies in particular on steep shady slopes in areas close to the tree line.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

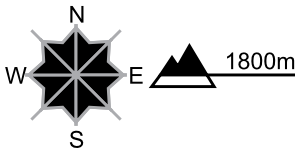
The fresh snow and wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Natural avalanches are to be expected, in particular medium-sized ones. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible.

Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Individual small and medium-sized natural avalanches are possible. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

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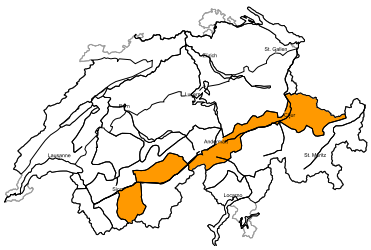
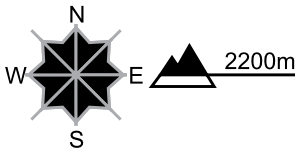
region E — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs

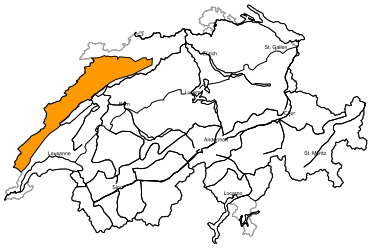
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

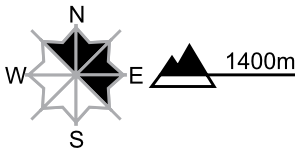
Wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. They can be released easily, even by a single winter sport participant,. The wind slabs are rather small. They are to be avoided in steep terrain. In high Alpine regions the avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and larger.
Ski touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region F — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



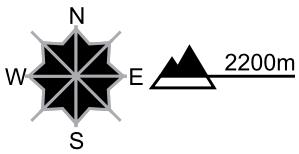
Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong southwesterly wind, wind slabs formed in particular in gullies and bowls and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. These can be released very easily. They are to be avoided in steep terrain.

region G — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released easily. They are mostly small. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. The wind slabs are to be bypassed in steep terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

region H — Level 1, low

Wind slabs

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.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 27.1.2019, 17:00

Snowpack

Following a long period of cold, the snowpack was loosely-bonded. It consisted of faceted crystals and in places surface hoar. On top of that, predominantly shallow but in places area-wide snowdrift accumulations have been deposited since Friday at high altitudes more than anywhere else. These drifted masses are still prone to triggering.
Fresh snow and freshly generated snowdrifts from Monday are being deposited on top of this unfavourably layered old snowpack surface and are thus extremely prone to triggering.
In the Vaud Alps and Fribourg Alps, as well as in the bordering regions of the Bernese Oberland, particularly near the edges of wooded zones, avalanches can in isolated cases fracture down to more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack and subsequently expand to dangerously large size. This is also possible in the Lower Valais, although particularly at altitudes between approximately 2000 and 2600 m there. In the regions of the north and the east where snowfall has been heaviest, the intermediate and deeper layers inside the snowpack are favourably structured.
Below 2200 to 2500 m on south-facing slopes more than anywhere else, isolated glide-snow avalanches are possible. In the regions of the north and the east where snowfall has been heaviest, these releases can attain great magnitude.

Observed weather on Sunday, 27.01.2019

In the furthermost eastern regions there were still bright intervals in the early morning hours, in the other regions skies were overcast. From the west, precipitation set in during the morning which fell as snow down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

By Sunday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered:
- Chablais, Trient, Bex-Villars: 10 to 20 cm
- remaining parts of the western sector of the northern flank of the Alps and Jura region: only a few centimetres; in the remaining regions it remained predominantly dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -4 °C.

Wind

Winds were southwesterly,
- on the northern flank of the Alps west of the Reuss, northern Valais, central and eastern sectors of the Main Alpine Ridge, Alpstein: intermittently blowing at strong velocity;
- in the remaining regions, blowing at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Monday, 28.01.2019

Skies will be heavily overcast and snowfall down to low lying areas is expected over widespread areas. During the night, the snowfall in western and northern regions will be intensive. In the furthermost southern regions, it will be quite sunny as a consequence of strong-velocity northerly winds.

Fresh snow

Between Sunday afternoon and Monday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated:
- northern Alpine Ridge from Chablais as far as Grimsel Pass, Vaud and Fribourg Alps: 30 to 40 cm; in the furthermost western Lower Valais and in Les Diablerets as much as 50 cm;
- remaining regions north of an imaginary Rhine-Rhone line, Lower Valais, southern Goms, remaining parts of the Gotthard region, Jura region: 20 to 30 cm;
- remaining parts of southern Upper Valais, Prättigau, Silvretta, Samnaun: 10 to 20 cm;
- further to the south: less than 10 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -10 °C.

Wind

- Winds will be westerly to northwesterly, blowing at moderate to strong velocity;
- Jura region: strong southwesterly winds;
- southern flank of the Alps: strong-veloctdy northerly winds extending down to the valleys.

Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 28 January 2019

Outlook through Wednesday, 30.01.2019

Tuesday

On Monday night, the snowfall will taper off, including in the northeastern regions. During the daytime on Tuesday, it will become quite sunny, starting in the west. In the southern Valais, on the southern flank of the Alps and in the Engadine, it will be predominantly sunny. With the termination of the snowfall, the naturally triggered avalanche activity is expected to diminish. Elsewhere, the avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly. In western and northern regions in particular, conditions will remain treacherous for backcountry winter sports away from the secured and marked ski runs.

Wednesday

Skies will be predominantly overcast and snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas. Most of the snowfall is expected to fall in western regions. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, the amounts of snowfall will be relatively small. Avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly. In western and northern regions more than than anywhere else, conditions for backcountry winter sports away from secured and marked ski runs will remain treacherous.