Avalanche bulletin through Thursday, 31 January 2019

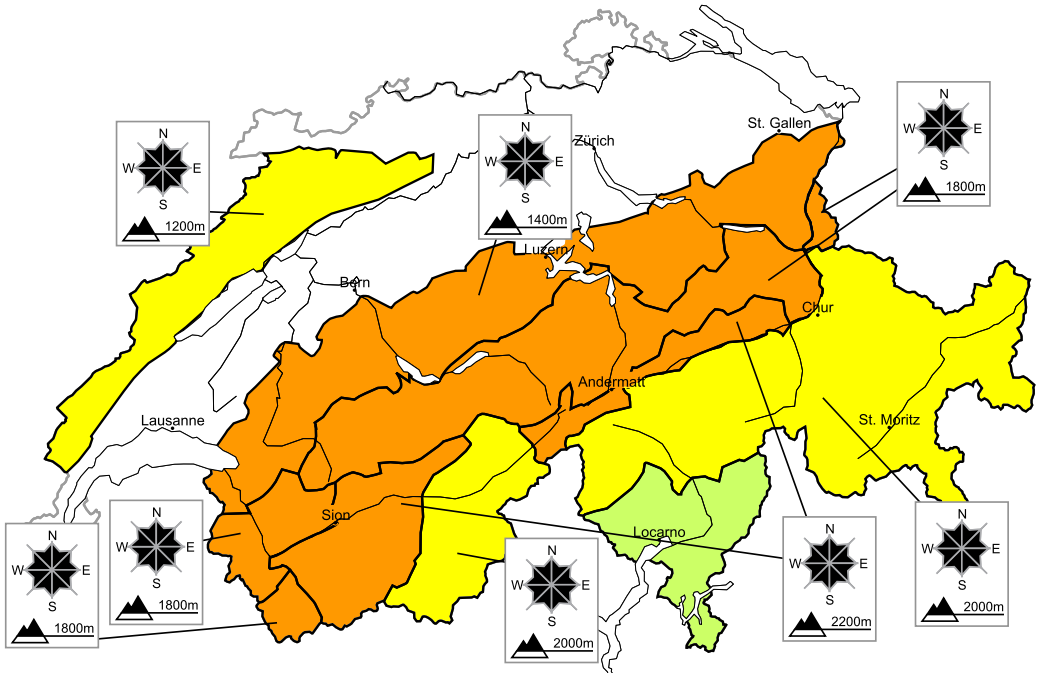
30.1.2019, 16:48

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions,, also below the tree line

Edition: 30.1.2019, 17:00 / Next update: 31.1.2019, 08:00

Avalanche danger

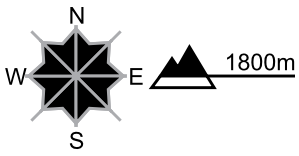
updated on 30.1.2019, 17:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Much of the fresh and wind-drifted snow of the last three days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Individual natural avalanches are possible, in particular on very steep north and east facing slopes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including large ones.
Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

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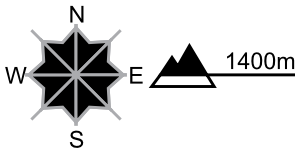
region B — Level 3, considerable

Fresh snow and snow drifts

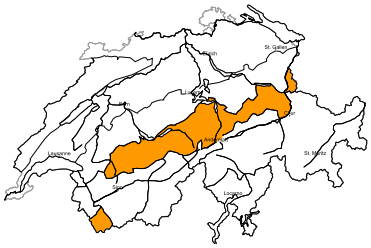
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

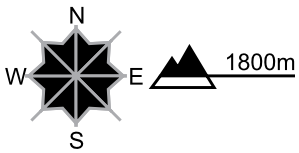
The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack,, also at intermediate altitudes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow and snow drifts

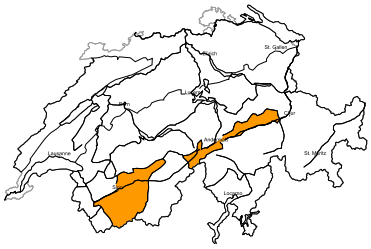
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

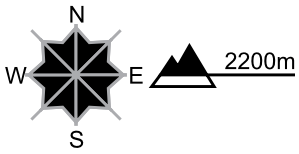
The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can reach quite a large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region D — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The rather small wind slabs of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack. These can be released by a single winter sport participant. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
Ski touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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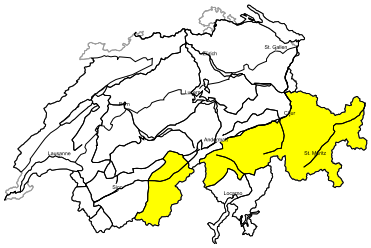
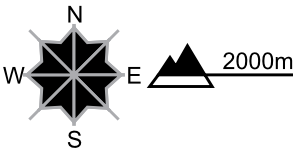
region E — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

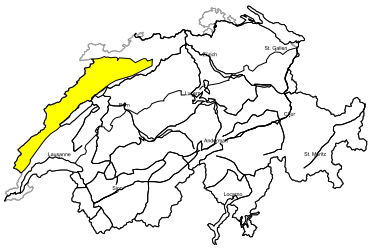
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

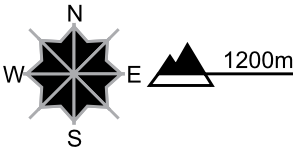
Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released in some cases. They are mostly small. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. The wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for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

region F — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

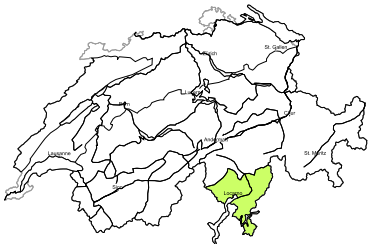
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a strong southwesterly wind, sometimes large wind slabs formed in the last few days in particular in gullies and bowls and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. These can in some cases be released. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region G — Level 1, low



Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular on extreme slopes. Older wind slabs are only small but in some cases prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 30.1.2019, 17:00

Snowpack

On Wednesday, the foehn wind and strong-velocity southwesterly winds transported a great deal of loosely-packed old snow in northern regions more than anywhere else, including at intermediate altitudes and far distant from ridgeline terrain. These snowdrift accumulations are prone to triggering and numerous avalanches were in fact triggered, isolated ones of which wewre very large-sized.
In the regions of the north and the east which have had the heaviest snowfall, the intermediate and lower layers inside the snowpack are favourably structured. Inside the uppermost layers, however, markedly weak layers are evident, particularly at intermediate altitudes along the Prealps. In the other regions of Switzerland the snowpack layering is not quite as favourable, nevertheless for a longer period there have hardly been any avalanches registered which fractured down to more deeply embedded layers.
Glide-snow avalanches continue to be possible in isolated cases below approximately 2200 m on south-facing slopes more than anywhere else. In the regions of the north and the east which have had the greatest amounts of snowfall, these avalanches can grow to great magnitude.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 30.01.2019

As a consequence of southerly foehn wind and strong-velocity southwesterly winds, skies were overcast and there was snowfall down to low lying regions both in the western and in the southern regions. Most of the fresh snow was registered in the furthermost western regions and in the Jura; in the other regions of Switzerland, the amounts were minor. In the southern regions and in central Grisons there were bright intervals during the afternoon.

Fresh snow

Since Tuesday evening there have been the following amounts of fresh snow registered: on the northern Alpine Ridge from Chablais to the Wildhorn, 20 to 30 cm; in the immediately bordering regions and in the Jura, 5 to 20 cm. Thus, during the last 3 days the overall amounts of fresh snow registered were:

- Trient region as far as Les Diablerets: 100 cm;
- northern flank of the Alps, northern and furthermost western parts of Lower Valais: 40 to 60 cm; from place to place as much as 70 cm;
- Jura: 30 to 60 cm;
- remaining parts of Valais not including the valleys of Visp, remaining parts of the Gotthard region, northern Grisons: 10 to 30 cm; in the other regions of Switzerland, less.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -10 °C.

Wind

- Nocturnal winds were blowing at strong velocity from the south and there was foehn wind in the valleys of the northern regions;
- during the daytime a strong-velocity southwesterly wind was blowing along the Prealps more than anywhere else, in the Jura it was blowing at storm strength.

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Weather forecast through Thursday, 31.01.2019

During the night in western regions in particular, there will be a small amount of snowfall. During the morning it will subsequently become quite sunny, starting in the west. In the afternoon in western regions, cloud cover will again move in. As evening approaches, southerly foehn wind will come up.

Fresh snow

In western regions, only a few centimetres; in the Engadine just a few snowflakes.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -8 °C in western regions and -11 °C in eastern regions.

Wind

- Winds will be westerly to southwesterly, blowing at moderate strength, but also at strong velocity in parts of the northern regions.
- Towards evening, southerly foehn wind will come up.

Outlook through Saturday, 02.02.2019

Friday

As a consequence of the foehn windstorms, skies in northern regions will be bright and it will remain dry for the most part. In the western and southern regions, skies will be heavily overcast and precipitation is anticipated. In the western regions, the snowfall level is expected to ascend to approximately 1200 m, in the southern regions the snowfall level will remain at low lying regions.
Avalanche danger levels will increase significantly in the Jura, in the furthermost western part of Lower Valais and in the southern regions including in the Upper Engadine. In the other regions avalanche danger will increase only slightly.

Saturday

In the northern regions, the foehn wind will come to an end. Subsequently, skies will be variably cloudy, including bright intervals as well as snow showers. In the southern regions skies will be overcast and precipitation is expected during the nighttime hours in particular. On the Main Alpine Ridge from Lukmanier Pass into the Münstertal, as well as in the Upper Engadine, large amounts of fresh snow are possible. In those regions, avalanche danger levels will increase significantly yet a further degree. In the bordering regions and elsewhere in the south, avalanche danger is expected to increase slightly; in all the other regions of Switzerland, avalanche danger will decrease somewhat.