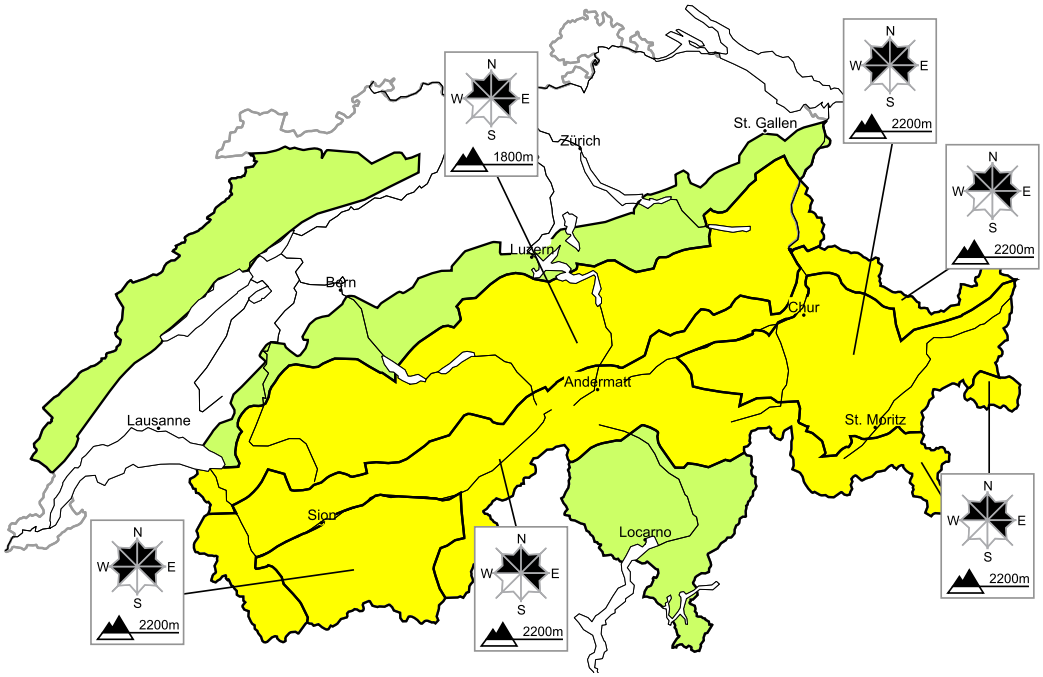
Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 3 January 2020

Moderate avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area. Fresh wind slabs require caution

Edition: 3.1.2020, 08:00 / Next update: 3.1.2020, 17:00

Dry avalanches

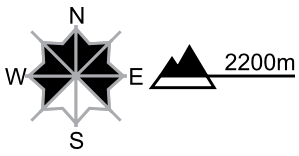
updated on 3.1.2020, 08:00



Dry, region A — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The strong wind will transport the loosely bonded old snow. Clearly visible wind slabs will form. They are rather small but prone to triggering.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can be released in deep layers and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 2600 m. They are rare and are barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. Caution is to be exercised in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack as well as in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Additional danger: Gliding avalanches (see 2nd map)

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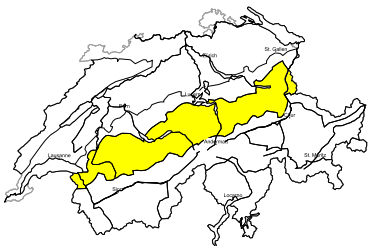
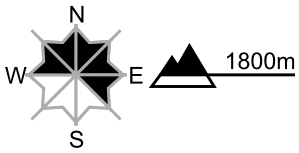
Dry, region B — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations

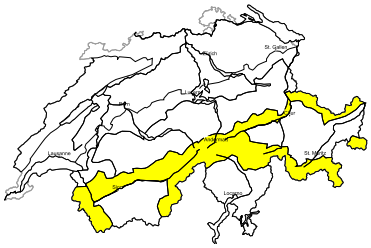


Danger description

The strong wind will transport the loosely bonded old snow. Clearly visible wind slabs will form. They are rather small but prone to triggering. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular adjacent to ridgelines and in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. Careful route selection is important.

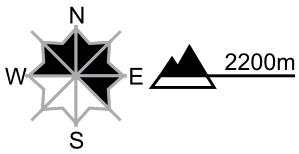
Additional danger: Gliding avalanches (see 2nd map)

Dry, region C — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

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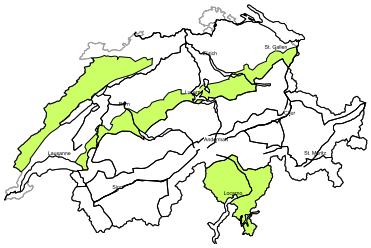
Additional danger: Gliding avalanches (see 2nd map)

Dry, region D — Level 1, low



Wind slabs

In the vicinity of peaks small wind slabs will form. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in terrain where there is a danger of falling. Even a small avalanche can sweep snow sport participants along and give rise to falls.

Additional danger: Gliding avalanches (see 2nd map)

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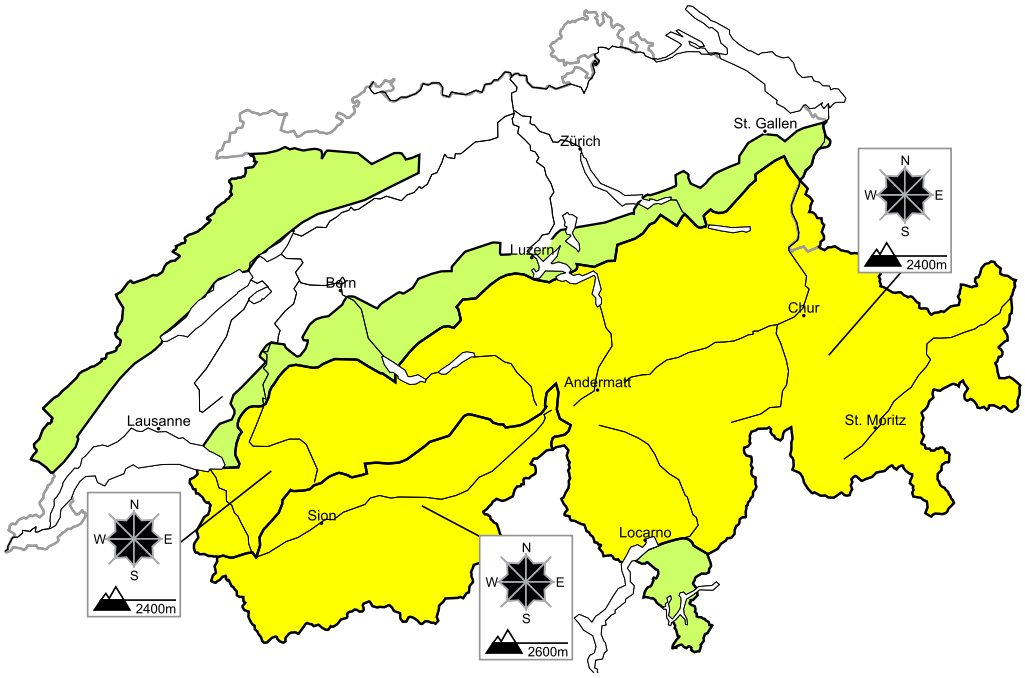
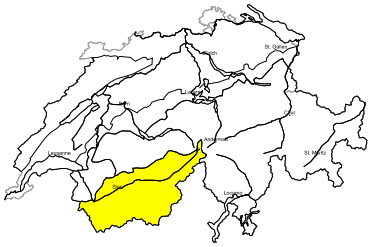
Gliding avalanches

updated on 3.1.2020, 08:00

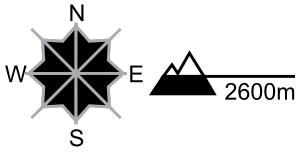


Gliding, region A — Level 2, moderate



Gliding avalanches

Avalanche prone locations

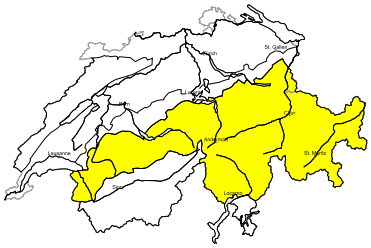


Danger description

Gliding avalanches can be released at any time of day or night. They can in isolated cases reach large size. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

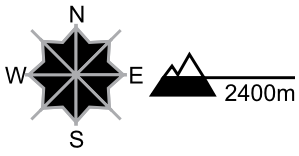
Additional danger: Dry avalanches (see 1st map)

Gliding, region B — Level 2, moderate



Gliding avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Gliding avalanches are possible at any time, in particular medium-sized ones. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

Additional danger: Dry avalanches (see 1st map)

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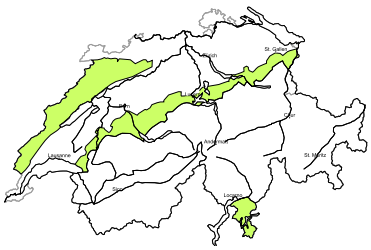
Gliding, region C — Level 1, low



Gliding avalanches

Individual gliding avalanches are possible, but they will be mostly small.

Additional danger: Dry avalanches (see 1st map)

Snowpack and weather

updated on 2.1.2020, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southerly winds, trigger sensitive snowdrift accumulations have been generated. On Friday as a result of westerly winds, additional snowdrift accumulations will be generated in the northern regions and at high altitudes in general.
In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons more than anywhere else, there are soft, expansively metamorphosed (faceted) layers of snow crystals deeply embedded inside the snowpack above approximately 2600 m. In isolated spots, avalanches can be triggered from these layers. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, fractures down to deep inside the snowpack are unlikely. On the southern flank of the Alps and in the furthermost western regions of the Lower Valais more than anywhere else, the snowpack structuring is favourable.
In all regions of Switzerland, gliding avalanches continue to be expected. These avalanches can release at any time of day or night and can grow to large size in isolated cases, particularly in the western regions.
The snowpack surfaces in ridgeline and pass areas and in general on the northern Alpine Ridge and on the Main Alpine Ridge are starkly impacted by wind influence and highly irregular. In the other regions of Switzerland the surfaces are still powdery in some places, particularly in wind-protected zones. On steep, sunny slopes, a breakable melt-freeze crust prevails over widespread areas.

Observed weather on Thursday, 02.01.2020

It was predominantly sunny in the mountains.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m,+1 °C.

Wind

Winds were southerly,

- on the northern Alpine Ridge from the Grimsel into the Glarner Alps, as well as on the central and eastern sectors of the Main Alpine Ridge, blowing at moderate to strong velocity,
- in the other regions of Switzerland blowing at light to moderate strength, increasing in velocity during the afternoon.

Weather forecast through Friday, 03.01.2020

Skies will frequently be overcast, but it will remain dry.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +2 °C in the northern regions and +4 °C in the southern regions.

Wind

Winds in the northern regions and in general at high altitudes will be blowing predominantly at strong velocity from westerly directions.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 3 January 2020

Outlook through Sunday, 05.01.2020

Between Friday evening and Saturday evening, a small amount of snowfall is anticipated in the northern regions. The snowfall level will descend from 1400 m down to 900 m. On Saturday afternoon, bright intervals are expected in the western regions. In the southern regions it will be quite sunny as a result of strong to storm-strength northerly winds.
On Sunday in the northern regions, skies will be overcast with clouds like high-fog. In the inneralpine regions and in the south, it will be predominantly sunny.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to increase somewhat in the southern regions on Saturday as a result of the northerly winds. In the other regions of Switzerland, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.
In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons more than anywhere else, isolated avalanche releases fracturing down to more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack continue to be possible. The danger of gliding snow avalanches remains upright. These releases can grow to large size in isolated cases, particularly in the western regions.