Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 5 February 2020

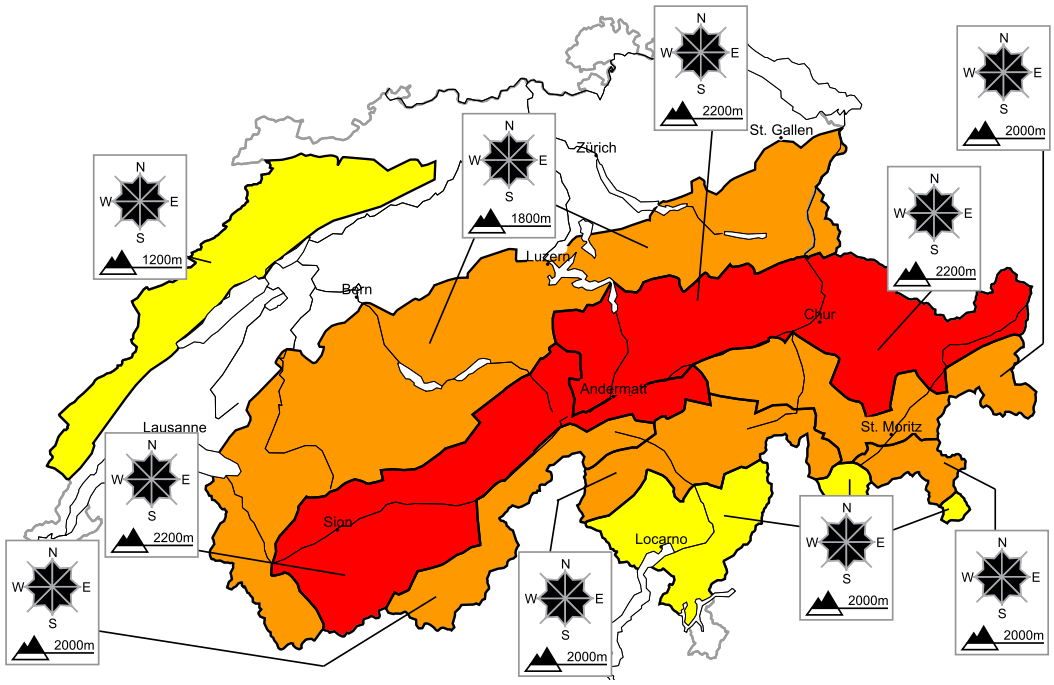
5.2.2020, 07:57

As a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather a high avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

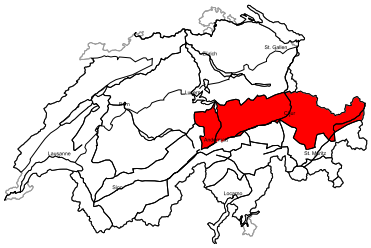
Edition: 5.2.2020, 08:00 / Next update: 5.2.2020, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 5.2.2020, 08:00

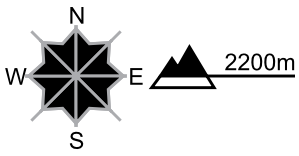


region A | **Level 4, high**



New snow

Avalanche prone locations

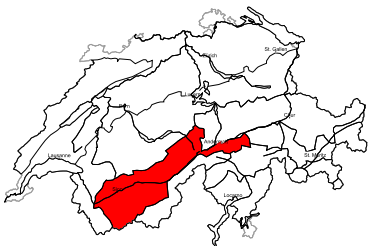


Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are prone to triggering. As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind the wind slabs will increase in size additionally. The danger exists in particular in alpine snow sports terrain. Numerous medium-sized and large natural avalanches are to be expected. In isolated cases, however, very large avalanches capable of endangering exposed parts of transportation routes are also possible.

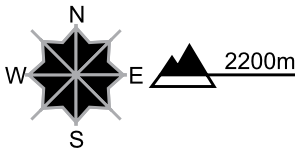
The backcountry and freeriding conditions are very critical.

region B — Level 4, high



New snow

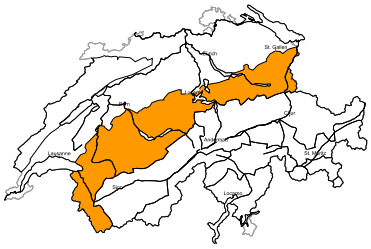
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

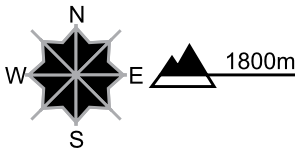
The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are prone to triggering. The danger exists in particular in alpine snow sports terrain. Avalanches capable of reaching the valley bottom are no longer likely to occur. Avalanches can be released very easily. In addition medium-sized to large natural avalanches are to be expected. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
The backcountry and freeriding conditions are very critical.

region C — Level 3, considerable



New snow

Avalanche prone locations



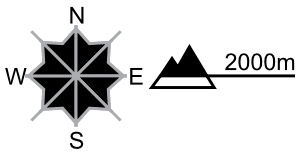
Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are prone to triggering. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant and reach large size. Isolated natural avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and strong wind the wind slabs will increase in size additionally. Distinct weak layers exist deeper in the snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach large size. Isolated natural avalanches are possible.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

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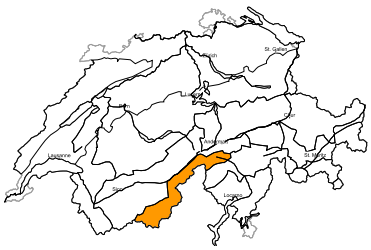
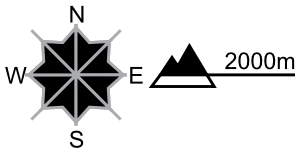
region E — Level 3, considerable



New snow

Avalanche prone locations



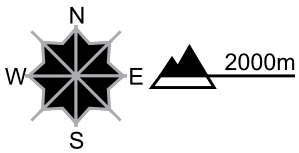
Danger description

The fresh snow and wind slabs of the last few days are prone to triggering. As a consequence of the sometimes storm force wind the wind slabs will increase in size additionally. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach large size. Isolated natural avalanches are possible.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

region F — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

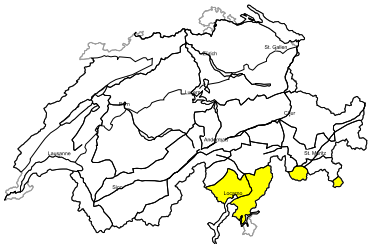
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

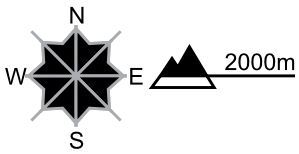
The wind slabs of the last few days represent the main danger. As a consequence of the sometimes storm force wind they will increase in size additionally. Avalanches can in some cases be released by a single winter sport participant. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

region G — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

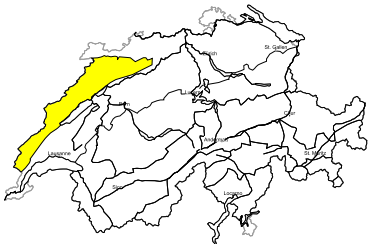
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

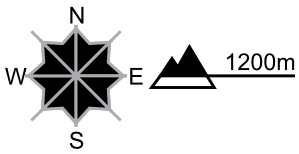
As a consequence of a strong northerly wind, mostly small wind slabs will form. The fresh and older wind slabs are prone to triggering. Avalanches can in isolated cases be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases.
The wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

region H — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong northerly wind, further wind slabs formed. Avalanches can in some places be released by people, but they will be small in most cases. Caution is to be exercised in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 4.2.2020, 17:00

Snowpack

Stormy weather has given rise to extensive snow drift accumulations down to areas close to the tree line. As a consequence of fresh snow and a storm force northerly wind, these accumulations will continue to increase in size. The fresh snow and wind slabs are prone to triggering. Avalanches can release the near-surface layers of snow that have been deposited in recent days, which remain loosely bonded. In addition, in particular on wind-protected shady slopes and generally in the inneralpine regions at elevated altitudes, soft and faceted weak layers exist deeper in the snowpack. Avalanches can penetrate these layers in some cases. In places that are exposed to the wind and on steep sunny slopes, the bonding of the old snowpack is generally more favourable.
Before the fall in temperature on Tuesday, as a consequence of rain the old snowpack in the north and in Valais became largely moist all the way through below 2300 m, and numerous wet avalanches occurred on Monday into the night. As the temperature fell on Tuesday, the wet avalanche activity decreased significantly. Isolated gliding avalanches can still occur.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 04.02.2020

On Monday night precipitation arrived from the northwest and was accompanied by a rapid drop in the snowfall level. During the day it was mostly very cloudy with snowfall, even at low altitudes. As a consequence of the strong northerly upper air flow, as the day progressed the precipitation reached as far as some regions south of the main Alpine ridge as well. It was dry and quite sunny with a north foehn only in the far south.

Fresh snow

From Monday evening until Tuesday afternoon:

- Lower Valais and northern Valais, central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps excluding the Prealps, also the Gotthard region, Prättigau, Silvretta, Samnaun: 20 to 40 cm
- Jura, Prealps, western part of the northern flank of the Alps, southern Upper Valais, rest of northern Ticino, central Grisons, Engadine: 10 to 20 cm
- Further south: 5 to 10 cm, remaining dry in central and southern Ticino

Temperature

Falling, at midday at 2000 m: about -8 °C in the north and -6 °C in the south

Wind

- During the night: over a wide area strong to storm force from the west, but in the south remaining light to moderate at first
- During the day: strong to storm force at elevated altitudes, otherwise moderate to strong from the northwest to north

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 05.02.2020

During Tuesday night, snow will fall over a wide area, even at low altitudes. On Wednesday morning the snowfall will ease from the west, and as the day progresses it will become increasingly sunny. In the east, until the afternoon the weather will remain mostly cloudy as the snowfall eases. In the far south it will remain largely dry; during the day it will be sunny with a north foehn.

Fresh snow

From Tuesday evening until Wednesday afternoon:

- Lower Valais, northern Valais, northern flank of the Alps, Gotthard region, northern and central Grisons, northern Engadine: 15 to 30 cm, but as much as 40 cm on the northern Alpine ridge from the Aletschhorn to the Tödi
- Jura, southern Upper Valais, rest of northern Ticino, southern Engadine, Val Bregaglia, Val Müstair. 5 to 15 cm
- Elsewhere: a few centimetres or remaining dry

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: between -6 °C in the west and -10 °C in the east

Wind

At elevated altitudes and in the south, strong to storm force, otherwise moderate to strong from the north to northeast

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Outlook through Friday, 07.02.2020

On both days the weather in the mountains will be mostly sunny and milder again. The wind will be light to moderate. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease. Warming and radiation during the day are expected to trigger moist snow slides in the fresh snow. Individual gliding avalanches are possible.