

## **Caution: fresh snow and snowdrifts at high altitudes, wet avalanches during the day**

Edition: 16.5.2020, 17:00 / Next update: 18.5.2020, 18:00

### **Avalanche danger**

#### **Main Alpine Ridge from Zermatt into the Rheinwald, northern Ticino, central Grisons as well as the southern regions of northern Grisons, Engadine and the southern valleys of Grisons**

The avalanche prone locations for dry-snow avalanches are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2800 m. The likelihood of avalanches being triggered is highest on north-facing slopes. Fresh fallen snow and freshly generated snowdrifts can be triggered even by one sole person from place to place. Avalanches can grow to large size in isolated cases. Skiing tours in outlying terrain require experience in the assessment of avalanche dangers on-site as well as caution.

Below approximately 2800 m, on steep sunny slopes also at higher altitudes, moist-snow avalanches continue to be expected to release from the fresh snow as a result of daytime warming and solar radiation. Isolated gliding avalanches continue to be possible. On north-facing slopes which have not yet discharged, more than anywhere else, these avalanches can grow to large size in some places.

#### **Remaining regions of the Swiss Alps**

The avalanche prone locations for dry-snow avalanches are to be found on steep wind-loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 2800 m more than anywhere else. The likelihood of avalanches being triggered is highest on north-facing slopes. Avalanches can be triggered by persons in some places. They tend to be small-sized. A prudent route selection is important.

Below approximately 2800 m, on steep sunny slopes also at higher altitudes, moist snowslides can be expected to release from the fresh fallen snow as a result of daytime warming and solar radiation. Isolated gliding avalanches continue to be possible in isolated cases, particularly on north-facing slopes.

## Snow and weather

### Snowpack

Over the course of the week now coming to a close there have been repeated rounds of snowfall at high altitudes. Most of the fresh snow (50 to 100 cm) fell above approximately 2800 m on the Main Alpine Ridge from Zermatt into the Bernina region and in the northern Ticino. In the remaining regions of the Main Alpine Ridge, in the eastern Bernese Oberland and in Grisons, there was approximately 20 to 50 cm of fresh snow registered, in the other regions less than 20 cm. The layers of fresh snow and freshly generated snowdrifts from this week are still dry and, in some places in the high alpine regions, prone to triggering.

The old snowpack on north-facing slopes is thoroughly wet on north-facing slopes below 2800 m, it is wet up to over 3000 m in the other aspects.

### Weather review to Friday, 15 May

On Thursday night there was precipitation registered in the southern regions more than anywhere else. During the daytime on Friday in the western and the southern regions there were bright intervals, in the other regions skies remained gray. On Saturday during the morning hours there was an additional bout of precipitation in the southern regions in particular. During the course of the day it became quite sunny, starting in the west. The snowfall level lay at 2300 to 2600 m in the southern regions on both days, at 2000 to 2200 m in the northern regions. Winds were blowing predominantly at light to moderate strength, mostly from westerly to southerly directions.

Between Thursday evening and Saturday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered above approximately 2800 m:

- Val Bregaglia and Bernina region: 20 to 30 cm;
- Main Alpine Ridge from Arolla into the Rheinwald, eastern Bernese Oberland, remaining parts of Grisons: 10 to 20 cm;
- remaining regions of Switzerland: only a few centimetres.

### Weather outlook through Monday, 18 May

On Sunday and on Monday it will be predominantly sunny. During the course of the day, convective cloud build-up is anticipated on both days. Isolated showers are possible. The nighttime skies will be only partly clear. Winds will be blowing at light to moderate strength and shift from southwesterly to northeasterly. The zero-degree level will ascend to 3000 to 3400 m.

## Outlook

On Tuesday and on Wednesday it will be quite sunny. During the course of the day, convective cloud build-up is anticipated on both days and showers are possible. The nocturnal skies will be only partially clear. Temperatures are expected to continue rising. The danger of dry-snow avalanches will decrease, but only incrementally on steep north-facing slopes in the high alpine regions. The danger of wet-snow avalanches will be subject to a daytime danger curve. Particularly from the fresh snow, moist snowslides and avalanches are possible. Gliding avalanches are possible on north-facing slopes which have not yet discharged more than anywhere else.

Keep informed about the publication of unannounced Avalanche Bulletins. Activate in the App WhiteRisk the "Push Summer Bulletin". You can also subscribe to the SMS Service by sending an SMS "START SLF SOMMER" to Nr. 9234 (only Swiss cell phone providers) or unsubscribe by sending an SMS "STOP SLF SOMMER" (CHF 0.2/SMS).