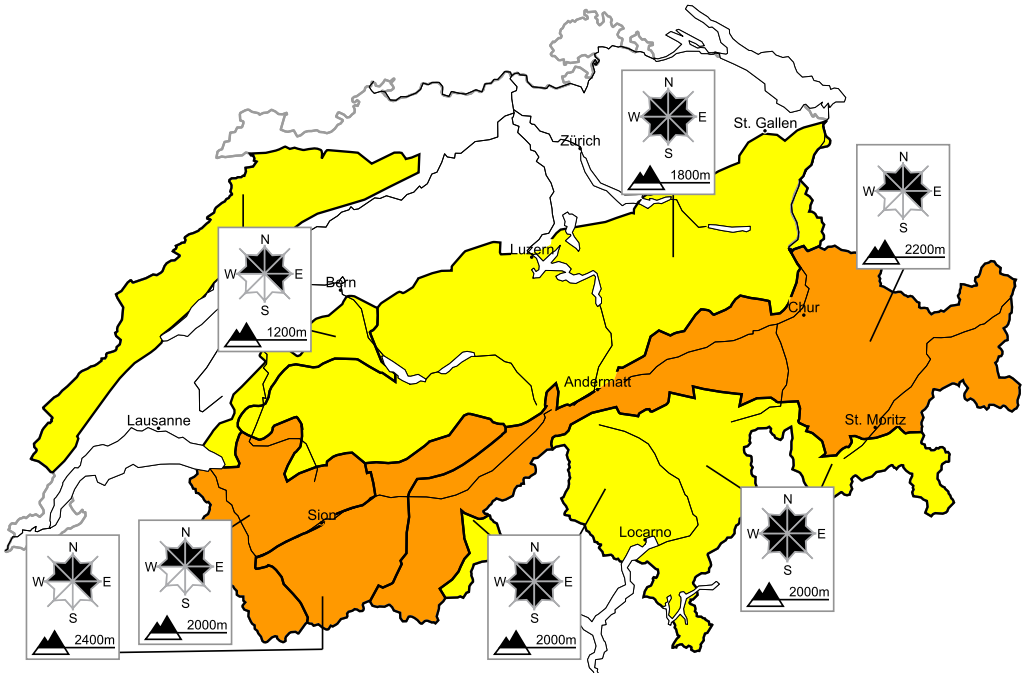
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 1.1.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 1.1.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

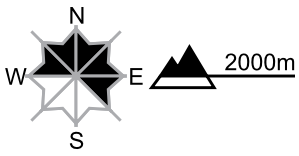
updated on 1.1.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

New snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of new snow and a sometimes strong southwesterly wind, further wind slabs formed. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including dangerously large ones.
Additionally avalanches can also be triggered in the old snowpack. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on rather lightly snow-covered north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. Isolated whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger.
Experience and restraint are required.

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

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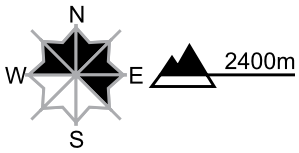
region B — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

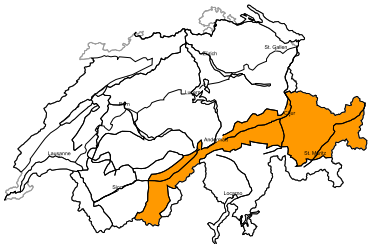
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

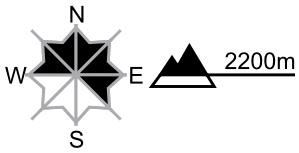
Older wind slabs can be released easily in some cases. Avalanches can penetrate deep layers.
Avalanches can additionally be released in the weakly bonded old snow. The avalanches can reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable.
Experience and restraint are required.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



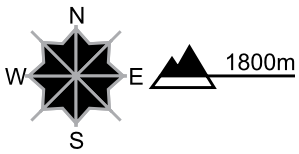
Danger description

The fresh and older wind slabs can be released by a single winter sport participant in some cases. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in steep terrain.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on very steep north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. Isolated whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region D — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs represent the main danger. They can in some cases be released by people. They are to be found in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain,, also at a distance from ridgelines.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can be triggered in the old snowpack and reach large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on north facing slopes above approximately 2000 m.
Experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is required.

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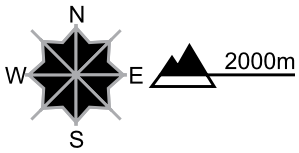
region E — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

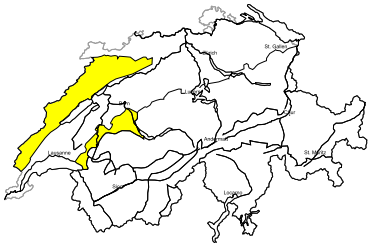
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

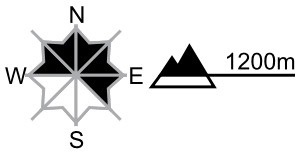
The fresh and older wind slabs can still be released in some cases. They are covered with new snow in some cases and therefore difficult to recognise. Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for careful route selection.

region F — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and older wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. They are mostly small. The wind slabs are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 31.12.2020, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southwesterly winds, fresh snow and loosely-packed near-to-surface snow was transported on Wednesday and during Wednesday night. The snowdrifts which were freshly generated are prone to triggering. The older snowdrift accumulations are stabilising to an increasing extent and are still prone to triggering only from place to place. Particularly in the Valais, in the northern Ticino and in Grisons, slab avalanches have been triggered by winter sports enthusiasts this week. In the regions of the northern flank of the Alps where snow is still shallow, wind-exposed terrain is frequently bare of snow, utterly windblown.
In the Valais, on the northern flank of the Alps and in the northern part of Grisons, there are more deeply embedded weakly consolidated layers of old snow evident widespread on shady slopes above approxiamtely 2000 to 2400 m. Particularly in the Valais, avalanches can be triggered in these layers or fracture down as far as these layers and subsequently grow to large size. In the regions of the southern flank of the Alps where there is a great deal of snow, the snowpack layering is more favourable. Fractures deeper down in the snowpack are unlikely in those regions.

Observed weather on Thursday, 31.12.2020

On New Year's Eve in the western regions, skies were heavily overcast and intermittent snowfall was registered down to low lying areas. In the eastern and the southern regions, it was quite sunny during the morning hours, then clouds moved in during the course of the day.

Fresh snow

Between Wednesday afternoon and Thursday afternoon:

- Jura region, Chablais, Vaud Alps, Fribourg Alps: 5 to 10 cm; in the furthermost western regions as much as 15 cm from place to place;
- remaining parts of the Prealps: only a few centimetres; in the remaining regions of Switzerland it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -7 °C.

Wind

- In the northern regions: winds during the nighttime hours were blowing at moderate strength from westerly directions, during the daytime at strong velocity in places, in the foehn-exposed valleys, foehn winds prevailed starting in the afternoon;
- in the southern regions: nocturnal winds were northerly, intermittently blowing at moderate strength; during the daytime blowing at light to moderate strength from southwesterly directions.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 1 January 2021

Weather forecast through Friday, 01.01.2021

On New Year's Day, skies will be overcast accompanied by snowfall, initially in the western regions, subsequently also in the southern regions. In the central Valais and the eastern regions, skies will be partially dotted with bright intervals.

Fresh snow

Between Thursday evening and Friday evening, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above approximately 600 m:

- western part of Jura region, furthermost western part of Lower Valais, southern flank of the Alps, Bernina region: 5 to 10 cm;
- eastern part of Jura region, northern Valais, Gotthard region, remaining regions of the northern flank of the Alps: as much as 5 cm.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -4 °C in the northern regions and -6 °C in the southern regions.

Wind

- Winds in the northern regions will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from westerly directions, in the foehn-exposed valleys an intensive southerly foehn wind will prevail intermittently, during the daytime predominantly blowing at light to moderate strength;
- in the southern regions, winds will be blowing at light strength from southerly to southeasterly directions, increasing in strength in the afternoon.

Outlook through Sunday, 03.01.2021

Saturday

Skies will be heavily overcast for the most part and in the northern regions intermittent snowfall is anticipated. In the southern regions and in the Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge, persistent snowfall is expected. In the inneralpine regions, short bright intervals are possible. The snowfall level will ascend in the southern regions to approximately 1000 m during the course of the day.
As a result of the fresh snow, avalanche danger levels will increase in the southern regions more than anywhere else. In the Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge, avalanche danger is expected to increase markedly, naturally triggered avalanches will also be possible during the course of the day. In the remaining regions of Switzerland, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.

Sunday

Skies will frequently be heavily overcast, an additional amount of snowfall is still anticipated, particularly in the southern regions. In the Valais, short bright intervals are possible.
The danger of naturally triggered avalanches will diminish in the regions of the south where there has been fresh snow. In the other regions of Switzerland, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.