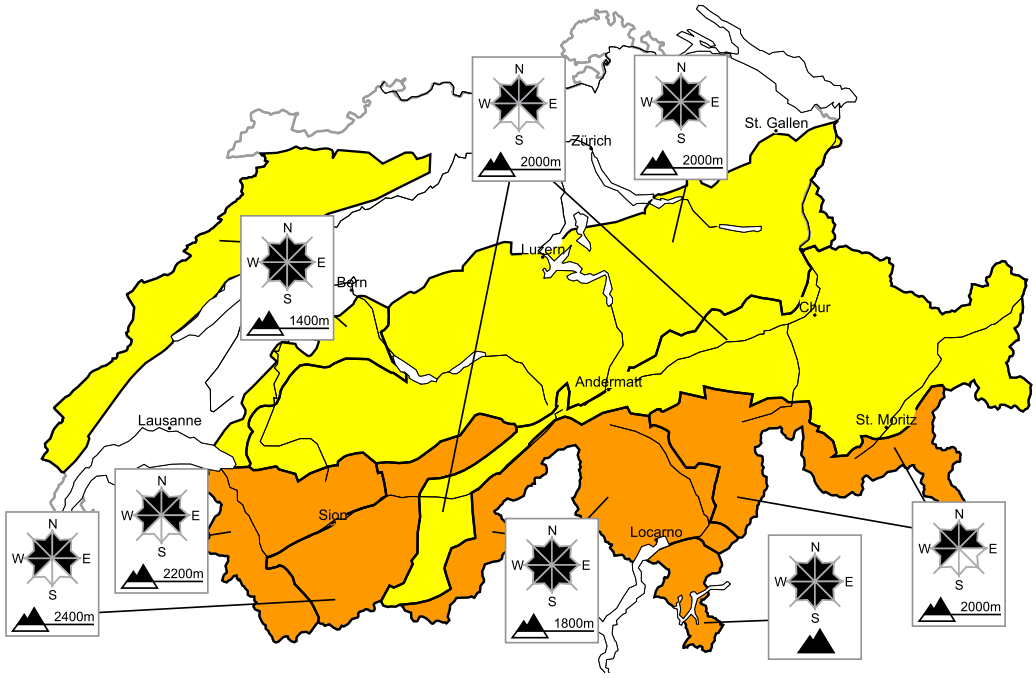
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 3.1.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 3.1.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

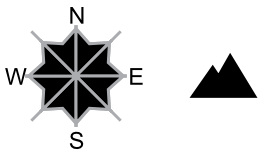
updated on 3.1.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

New snow, wet avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs are prone to triggering. The avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found on steep slopes above approximately 1400 m. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches very easily. Natural avalanches are possible, even large ones.
In addition there is a danger of wet snow slides and avalanches. This applies on steep slopes below approximately 1400 m.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

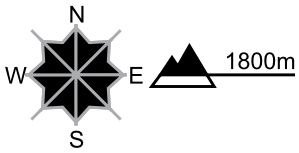
Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region B — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



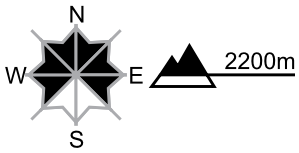
Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs are prone to triggering. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches very easily. Natural avalanches are possible, even large ones.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



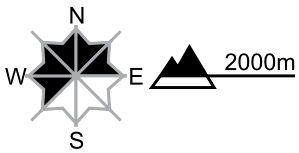
Danger description

Avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on rather lightly snow-covered north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m. In addition the wind slabs of the last few days are prone to triggering still. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

region D — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

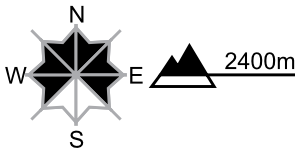
The new snow and wind slabs are poorly bonded with the old snowpack in particular on steep shady slopes. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches, including medium-sized ones.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region E — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

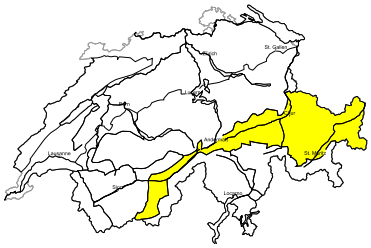
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

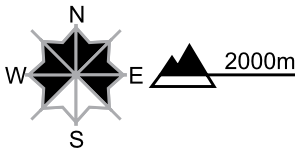
The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released easily in some cases. Avalanches can penetrate deep layers.
Avalanches can additionally be released in the weakly bonded old snow. The avalanches can reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable.
Experience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

region F — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs, old snow

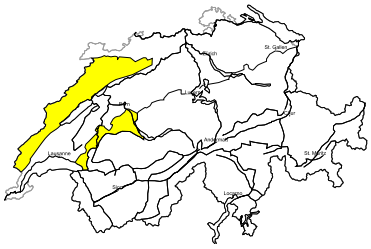
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

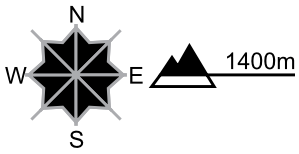
The wind slabs of the last few days can be released by a single winter sport participant in isolated cases. Caution is to be exercised at their margins in particular.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on very steep north facing slopes above approximately 2400 m.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for defensive route selection.

region G — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



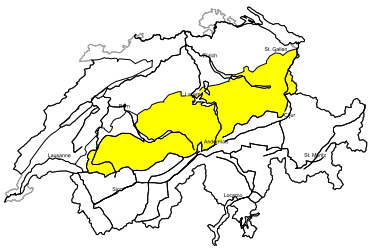
Danger description

As a consequence of a sometimes strong easterly wind, mostly small wind slabs formed. The fresh and older wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. The avalanche prone locations are to be found 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.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

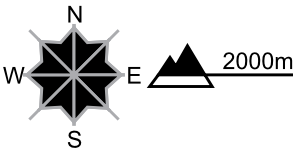
region H

Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a moderate wind from easterly directions, mostly small wind slabs formed. The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Avalanches can in some cases be released by people.
Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can be triggered in the old snowpack. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on north facing slopes above approximately 2000 m.
Careful route selection is important.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

Snowpack and weather

updated on 2.1.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southeasterly winds, fresh fallen snow and, to some extent, also loosely-packed near-to-surface old snow has been transported. In the southern regions the snowdrift accumulations are expanding somewhat. Fresh fallen snow and freshly-generated snowdrifts have been deposited on wind-protected slopes atop a loosely-packed old snowpack surface or on top of surface hoar and are prone to triggering. Furthermore, older snowdrift accumulations are still triggerable in some places, namely, in rimline zones of the drifts in particular.
In the regions where snow is still shallow, particularly in the Jura regions and on the northern flank of the Alps, wind-exposed zones such as summits, ridges and knolls are generally quite marked by wind impact or else completely windblown and bare of snow. Only in wind-protected terrain is there still loosely-packed powder evident.
More deeply embedded inside the snowpack in the Valais, on the northern flank of the Alps and in the northern parts of Grisons, on shady slopes above approximately 2000 to 2400 m, there are weakly consolidated layers evident over widespread areas. Particularly in the Valais, avalanches can be triggered in these layers or else fracture down to 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 weakened old snowpack is now heavily covered; thus, fractures down to more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpack are unlikely.
As a result of rainfall, the snowpack has become moist down to lower altitudes in southern Ticino.

Observed weather on Saturday, 02.01.2021

In the southern regions, skies were predominantly heavily overcast, accompanied by snowfall down to low lying areas. During the course of the day, the snowfall level in Sottoceneri ascended to nearly 1000 m. In the regions north of the Main Alpine Ridge, skies were frequently overcast, accompanied by sunny intervals in Lower Valais and in northern Grisons in particular.

Fresh snow

Between Friday morning and Saturday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered above approximately 1000 m:

- Ticino, Simplon region: 20 to 40 cm;
- remaining parts of Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge on the Italian border, remaining parts of the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, as well as from Val Bregaglia over the Bernina into Val Poschiavo: 10 to 20 cm;
- bordering regions, only a few centimetres; in the other regions of Switzerland it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -2 °C in the western regions and -4 °C in the southern and eastern regions.

Wind

- Winds were blowing at light to moderate strength, at high altitudes in the southern regions intermittently at strong velocity from the southeast;
- in the Prealps blowing at moderate strength during the daytime, at the heights in the Jura region a moderate to strong velocity bise wind.

Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 3 January 2021

Weather forecast through Sunday, 03.01.2021

In the southern regions, skies will be heavily overcast accompanied by precipitation. The snowfall level will descend to approximately 800 m during the course of the day. In the northern regions, skies will frequently be overcast, a small amount of snowfall is possible from region to region. In the inneralpine regions, skies will be intermittently bright in the Valais, some bright intervals are anticipated in Grisons.

Fresh snow

Between Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above approximately 1200 m:

- Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom: 5 to 10 cm; in the Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge and in the western and southern parts of Ticino: 20 cm;
- further to the north: only a few centimetres, or else it will remain dry.

Temperature

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

Wind

- Winds will be blowing at light to moderate strength, in the southern and eastern regions mostly at moderate strength, from southerly directions;
- in the Jura region and the Prealps, also moderate-strength bise winds on Saturday night, during the daytime on Sunday blowing predominantly at light strength.

Outlook through Tuesday, 05.01.2021

In the western and the southern regions, skies on Monday and Tuesday will be overcast, with high-fog like cloud; above 1400 to 1800 m it will be rather sunny.
In the southern regions on Monday, skies will be variably cloudy, and above approximately 500 m a small amount of snowfall is possible. On Tuesday in the southern regions, it will be partly sunny.
Avalanche danger levels are expected to gradually decrease.