Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 4 January 2021

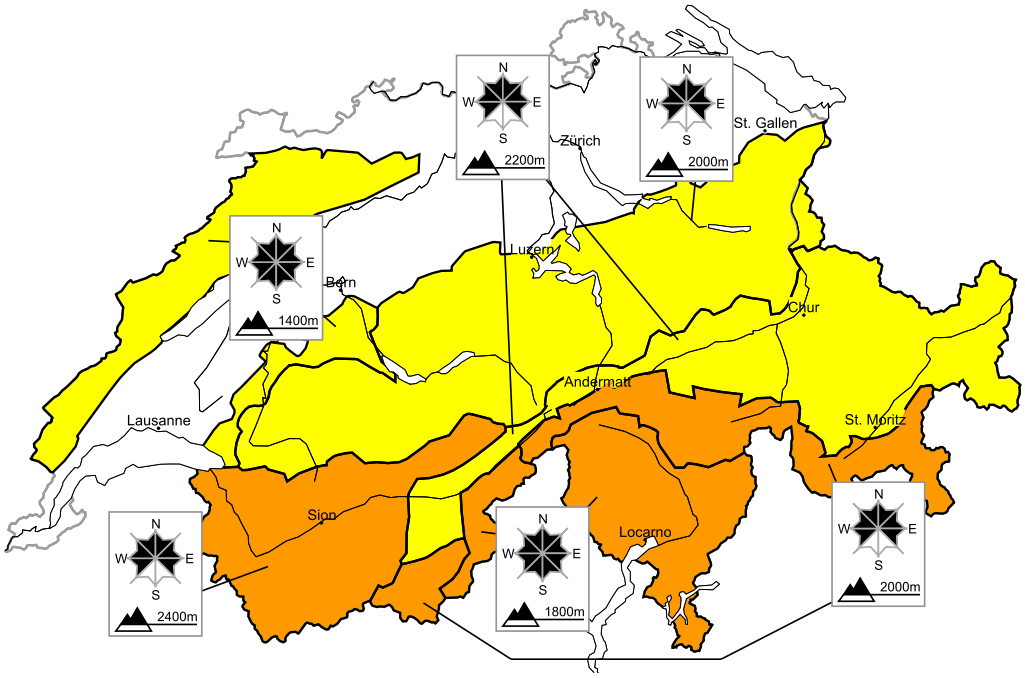
4.1.2021, 07:51

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 4.1.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 4.1.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

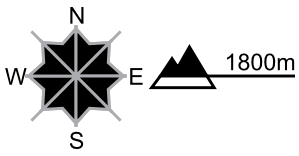
updated on 4.1.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Large quantities of fresh snow and the wind-drifted snow of the last few days represent the main danger. At elevated altitudes the wind slabs are larger. Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily, including large ones. Only isolated natural avalanches are possible.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

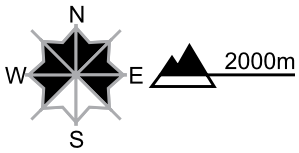
Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

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

region B — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



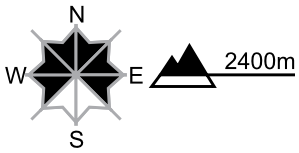
Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs are 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.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

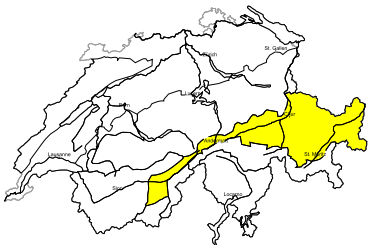
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

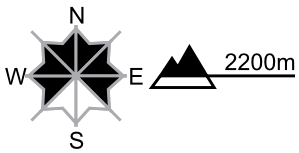
The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released easily in some cases. Avalanches can penetrate deep layers.
Avalanches can additionally be released in the weakly bonded old snow. The avalanches can reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

region D — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs, old snow

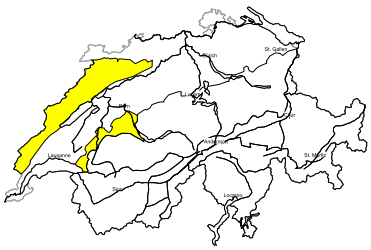
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

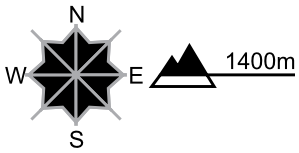
The wind slabs of the last few days can be released by a single winter sport participant in isolated cases. Caution is to be exercised at their margins in particular.
Additionally in isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. These avalanche prone 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 E — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

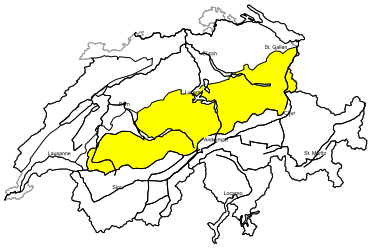
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

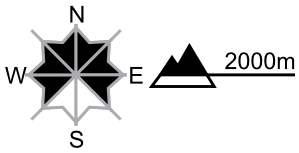
The somewhat older wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain.
Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular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

region F — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

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 3.1.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of southerly winds there has been fresh snow registered in the southern regions, in the remaining regions of Switzerland loosely-packed, near-to-surface old snow has been transported. In the southern regions, large-sized snowdrift accumulations have been generated in some high-altitude places, often prone to triggering. Some large-sized naturally triggered avalanches have been reported. In the northern regions, older snowdrift accumulations are still triggerable from place to place, particularly in the rimline zones.
In the regions where snow is still shallow, particularly in the Jura region and on the northern flank of the Alps, wind-exposed zones such as summit areas, ridges and knolls are strikingly wind-impacted or even windblown, completely bare of snow. Only in the wind-protected areas is there still loosely-packed snow in some places.
More deeply embedded inside the snowpack in the Valais, on the northern flank of the snow and in the northern parts of Grisons on shady slopes above approximately 2000 to 2400 m, there are weakly-consolidated old snowpack 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 snow is thickly blanketed by fresher snow and fractures deeper down inside the snowpack are not likely. At low lying areas of the Ticino, the snowpack is moist.

Observed weather on Sunday, 03.01.2021

In the southern regions skies were heavily overcast amid persistent precipitation which subsequently slackened off on Sunday afternoon. In the Simplon region and the Ticino, more precipitation than expected fell on Sunday. The snowfall level in Sottoceneri lay at 900 m, in the other regions at 500 m. In the northern regions skies were frequently overcast and there was a small amount of snowfall from place to place. In the inneralpine regions skies were intermittently bright, in Grisons there were bright intervals.

Fresh snow

Between Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon in the Simplon region and the Ticino, there was 30-40 cm of fresh snow registered, as much as 50 cm from place to place. All in all since the start of this round of precipitation on Friday morning until Sunday morning, the following amounts were registered above approximately 1200 m:

- Ticino, Simplon region: 40 to 60 cm; up to 80 cm from place to place;
- remaining parts of Upper Valais sector of Main Alpine Ridge on the Italian border, remaining parts of the southern flank of the Alps not including Val Müstair: 20 to 40 cm;
- directly bordering regions to the north, Upper Engadine, Val Müstair: 5 to 15 cm; in the other regions of Switzerland only a few centimetres, or else it remained dry.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m in the northwestern regions, -9 °C; in the other regions, -5 °C over widespread areas.

Wind

Winds were blowing at light to moderate strength, in the southern regions and on the northern part of the Alpine Ridge at moderate to strong velocity from southerly directions during the daytime hours.

Avalanche bulletin for Monday, 4 January 2021

Weather forecast through Monday, 04.01.2021

In the southern regions skies will be heavily overcast for the most part, accompanied by light precipitation. The snowfall level will lie at 600 m. In the northern regions, skies will be overcast with high-fog like cloud cover. Above 1400 to 1800 m, as well as in the inneralpine region of Valais and Grisons, it will be rather sunny.

Fresh snow

Between Sunday evening and Monday afternoon, above approximately 1000 m:

· Upper Valais sector of Main Alpine Ridge on the Italian border, Ticino: 5 to 10 cm;
· remaining regions of the Main Alpine Ridge and the southern flank of the Alps: maximum 5 cm.

Temperature

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

Wind

· Winds will be blowing at light to moderate strength from southerly to southeasterly directions;
· in the northern regions during the afternoon, moderate-strength bise winds.

Outlook through Wednesday, 06.01.2021

In the southern regions on Monday night, a small amount of snowfall is anticipated. During the course of the day on Tuesday as well as on Wednesday, it will be partly sunny.
In the northern regions on both days, skies will be overcast with high-foglike cloud cover. Above 1400 to 2000 m, as well as in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, it will be rather sunny, accompanied by high-altitude cloud cover. Avalanche danger levels are expected to incrementally decrease.