Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 20 January 2021

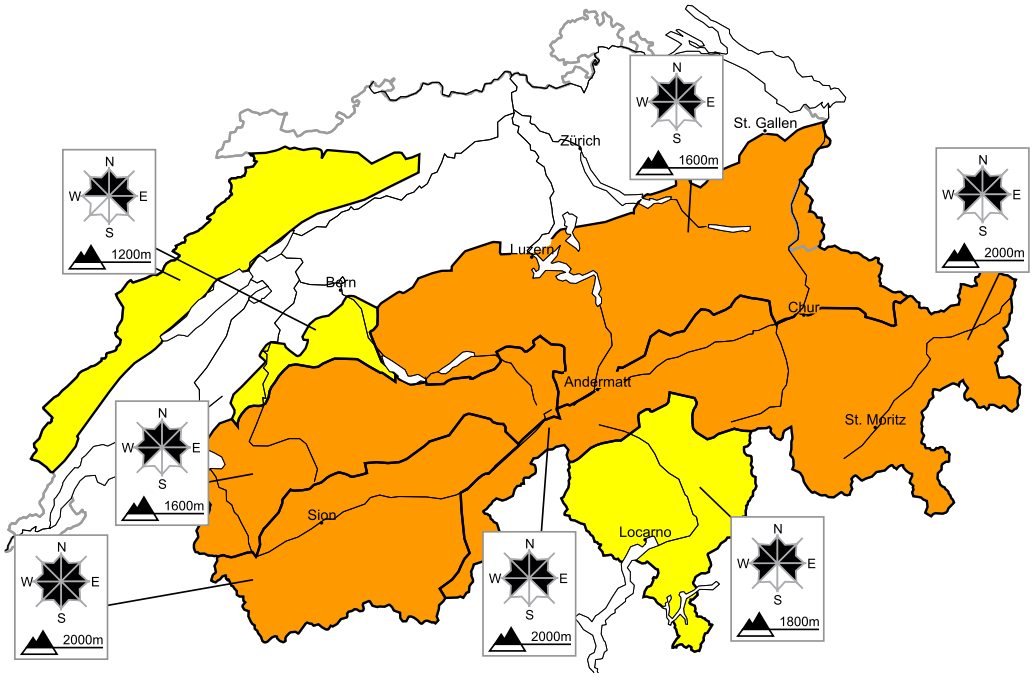
20.1.2021, 07:47

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 20.1.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 20.1.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

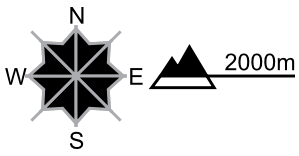
updated on 20.1.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow and reach large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack serve as an alarm indicating the danger.
In addition avalanche prone wind slabs will form.
Individual natural avalanches are possible, this applies especially in the afternoon.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

Gliding avalanches

On steep south facing slopes more frequent medium-sized gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are to be expected. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

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

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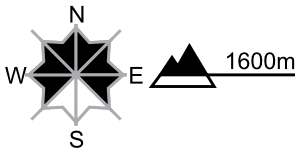
region B — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The storm force foehn wind will transport the snow. The wind slabs can be released easily. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In the regions exposed to the foehn wind more frequent natural avalanches are to be expected from midday.
To some extent avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution. Regions that are exposed to the foehn wind:

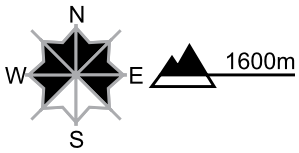
Gliding avalanches

On steep south facing slopes more frequent medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are to be expected. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The storm force foehn wind will transport the snow. The wind slabs can be released easily. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In the regions exposed to the foehn wind more frequent natural avalanches are to be expected from midday.
In isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack and reach large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
Ski touring and other off-piste activities, including snowshoe hiking, call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Gliding avalanches

On steep south facing slopes more frequent medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are to be expected. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

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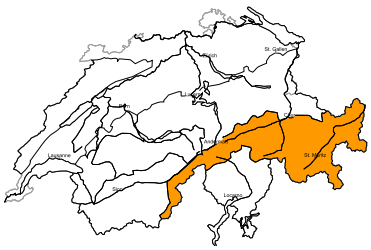
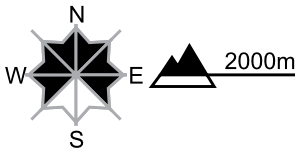
region D — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



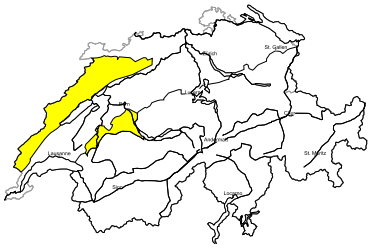
Danger description

As a consequence of a sometimes strong southwesterly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. In isolated cases these can be released in the weakly bonded old snow and reach large size. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
In the regions exposed to the foehn wind more frequent natural avalanches are possible from midday.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Gliding avalanches

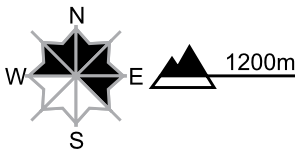
On steep south facing slopes more frequent medium-sized gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are to be expected. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

region E — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are mostly small but can in some cases be released easily. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Avalanches can additionally in very isolated cases be released in deeper layers also. Caution is to be exercised on very steep shady slopes.
Ski touring and snowshoe hiking call for defensive route selection.

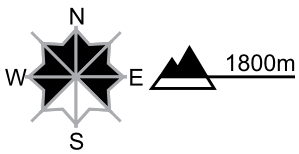
Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes gliding avalanches are possible. Mostly they are small.

region F — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The somewhat older wind slabs are in some cases still prone to triggering. These avalanche prone locations are clearly recognisable to the trained eye. The wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 19.1.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

On Tuesday on the northern flank of the Alps, the westerly wind and milder temperatures have given rise to compact, but easily released snow drift accumulations. In addition, the foehn storm on Wednesday will give rise to large snow drift accumulations over a wide area, even in places that are some distance from ridgelines. They will be prone to triggering. In many places, last week's fresh snow and wind slab layers are lying on a distinct weak layer, including below the tree line. In the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps, this weak layer is often covered by thick layers of snow and therefore less prone to triggering. In particular in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps, in Valais and Grisons, and generally in places where relatively little fresh snow is lying, avalanches can still be released in this layer. Likewise in these regions, avalanches can also be released near the ground in the old snow and reach a large size. On the southern flank of the Alps, the bonding of the snowpack is more favourable. Fractures are unlikely to occur deep in the snowpack.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 19.01.2021

It was quite sunny with some cloudbanks.

Fresh snow
During Monday night, a few more centimetres of snow fell in some places on the northern flank of the Alps.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between 0 °C in the west and -3 °C in the east, and -6 °C in the south

Wind
- Northern flank of the Alps, Jura: moderate to strong from westerly directions
- Otherwise light to moderate

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 20.01.2021

The north will be mostly sunny with cloudbanks. The south will be bright at first, before becoming increasingly cloudy as the day progresses.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between 0 °C in the west and 2 °C in the east, and -6 °C in the south

Wind
- In the north, moderate to strong from the southwest, in the afternoon in the west, strong to storm force
- In the Alpine valleys as the day progresses, strong to storm force south foehn
- In the south, moderate from the southwest

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 20 January 2021

Outlook through Friday, 22.01.2021

Thursday

As a consequence of the foehn storm, the exposed regions will be partly sunny, otherwise it will be mostly cloudy. In the west from the afternoon, a little snow will fall above approximately 1400 m. On the main Alpine ridge and to the south during the day, it will be very cloudy with precipitation. The snowfall level will be between 400 and 700 m.
In the south, the avalanche danger will increase as a consequence of fresh snow; in the north, it will not change significantly.

Friday

The central and eastern regions of the Alps will be partly sunny. Otherwise there will be variable to dense cloud cover with precipitation at times. The snowfall level will drop from 1200 m towards 800 m. In the north, the westerly wind will be strong at times. In the south in the morning, a little more snow will fall above approximately 800 m; in the afternoon there will be some isolated bright spells.
As a consequence of the fresh snow, the danger of avalanches will increase in some regions of the west and south; otherwise it will not change significantly.