Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 4 February 2021

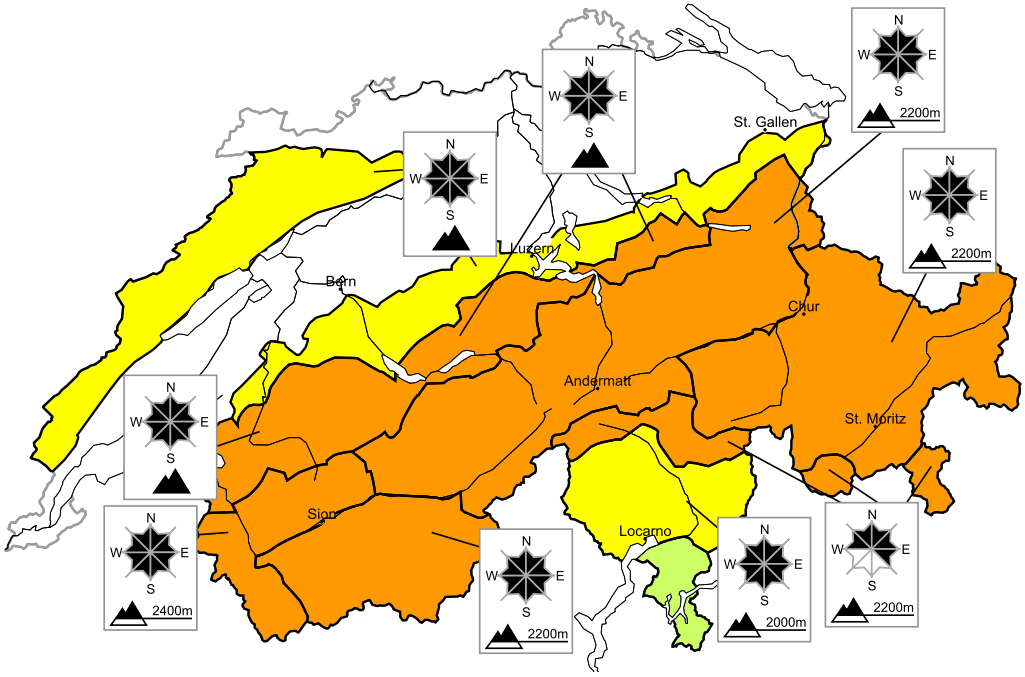
4.2.2021, 07:55

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 4.2.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 4.2.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

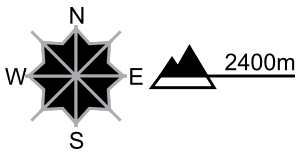
updated on 4.2.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

New snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs of the last three days represent the main danger. Additionally in some places avalanches can also be triggered in near-ground layers and reach large size. Isolated natural avalanches are possible.
Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

Gliding avalanches

Medium-sized to large gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2400 m. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

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

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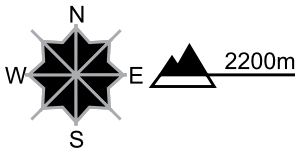
region B — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

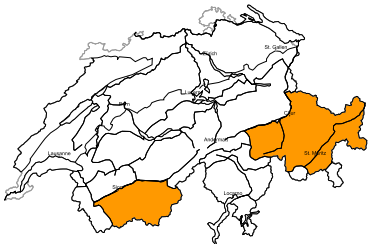
As a consequence of new snow and a sometimes strong southwesterly wind, wind slabs formed. These can be released by a single winter sport participant. Individual natural avalanches are possible. These can in isolated cases be triggered in deep layers and reach large size.

Off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

Gliding avalanches

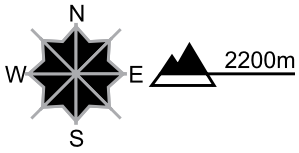
Medium-sized to large gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2200 m. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered occasionally.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

In some places avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow and reach large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack and in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow. In little used terrain the avalanche prone locations are more prevalent. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger.
The wind slabs of Wednesday are prone to triggering. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

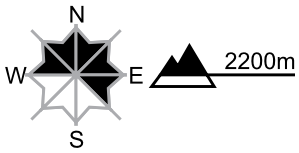
Gliding avalanches

Gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered occasionally.

region D — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are in some cases prone to triggering. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant and reach medium size.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

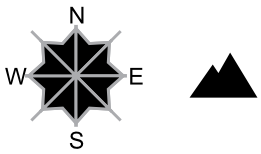
Gliding avalanches

Individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2000 m.

region E — Level 3, considerable

Gliding avalanches, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



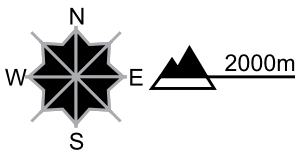
Danger description

Medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large gliding avalanches are to be expected. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered occasionally.
In particular on north and east facing slopes wind slabs formed. This applies especially above approximately 2200 m. These avalanche prone locations are clearly recognisable to the trained eye. The wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain.

region F — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released in some cases. Avalanches can reach medium size.
Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

Gliding avalanches

Individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2000 m.

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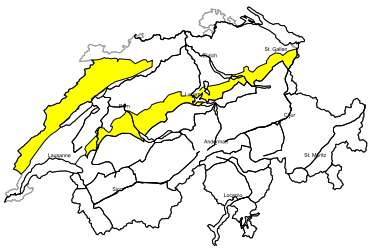
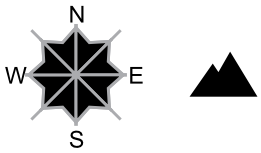
region G — Level 2, moderate



Wet and full-depth avalanches

Avalanche prone locations



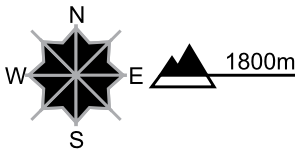
Danger description

Small and medium-sized gliding avalanches and wet snow slides are possible. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region H — Level 1, low

No distinct avalanche problem

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Individual avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found especially in extremely steep terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised as well in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.
As a consequence of warming individual mostly small gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are possible.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 3.2.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

The snowpack at intermediate and high altitudes is above average in depth. Particularly above approximately 2200 m, there are strikingly weak layers to be found deeply embedded inside the snow cover. Inside these layers, particularly in places where the snowpack is relatively shallow, avalanches can be triggered, as several wide-ranging avalanche releases during the last few days have demonstrated. In addition, naturally triggered avalanches which fracture in these layers and subsequently sweep away the entire snowpack cannot, in isolated cases, be ruled out. For that reason, from avalanche starting zones which have not yet discharged, isolated very-large sized avalanches continue to be possible. In the southern regions the snowpack layering is more favourable. Fractures deeper down in the old snow are no longer likely. At heightened altitudes, strong-velocity southwesterly winds generated fresh snowdrift accumulations on Wednesday which in places are prone to triggering.
Below approximately 2000 m, the snowpack manifests marked effects of the warmth and the rainfall. Medium-to-large sized wet-snow and gliding avalanches continue to be possible.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 03.02.2021

Skies were heavily overcast for the most part. On the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in the Jura region, more than anywhere else, there was precipitation registered. The snowfall level lay between 2000 and 2400 m. Only in the inneralpine regions of Grisons was it partly sunny and remained dry.

Fresh snow
Above 2200 m:
· Lower Valais, central Valais, Lötschental, Vaud Alps: 10 to 25 cm;
· remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps and remaining regions of Upper Valais: 5 to 10 cm;
· in the other regions of Switzerland, less.
Overall during the last three days since Sunday morning, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered (with short dry phases) above 1800 m:
· Vaud Alps, furthermost western part of Lower Valais, northern Valais: 60 zo 90 cm;
· remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining regions of Lower Valais, northern Upper Valais: 40 to 60 cm;
· southern part of Upper Valais: 20 to 40 cm.
In Grisons and on the southern flank of the Alps there was significantly less fresh snow registered or else it remained dry.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, in the northern regions +3 °C, and on the southern flank of the Alps -2 °C.

Wind
Over widespread areas at high altitudes, moderate to strong-velocity winds from southwesterly directions were blowing; on the southern flank of the Alps, light-to-moderate winds prevailed.

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Weather forecast through Thursday, 04.02.2021

During the first half of Wednesday night, a small amount of additional precipitation is anticipated over widespread areas. The snowfall level will descend from over 2000 m down to 1500 m. In the latter part of the night, skies will increasingly clear up. During the daytime on Thursday it will be quite sunny and dry in the mountains, in spite of high-altitude cloudbanks.

Fresh snow
Above 2200 m:
· furthermost western part of Lower Valais: 5 to 15 cm; from place to place as much as 20 cm;
· northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of Valais: approximately 5 cm;
· in the other regions of Switzerland, less; or else it will remain dry.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between +2 °C in the western regions and 0 °C in the eastern regions.

Wind
Winds during the night on the northern flank of the Alps and in general in high alpine regions will be blowing at strong velocity, intermittently at storm strength, during the daytime predominantly at moderate strength, from southwesterly directions.

Outlook through Saturday, 06.02.2021

On the northern flank of the Alps and in the inneralpine regions it will be predominantly sunny as a result of southerly foehn winds. On the southern flank of the Alps, skies will be heavily overcast by and large, but it will remain dry.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches will continue to decrease. The danger of gliding avalanches continues to require attentiveness.