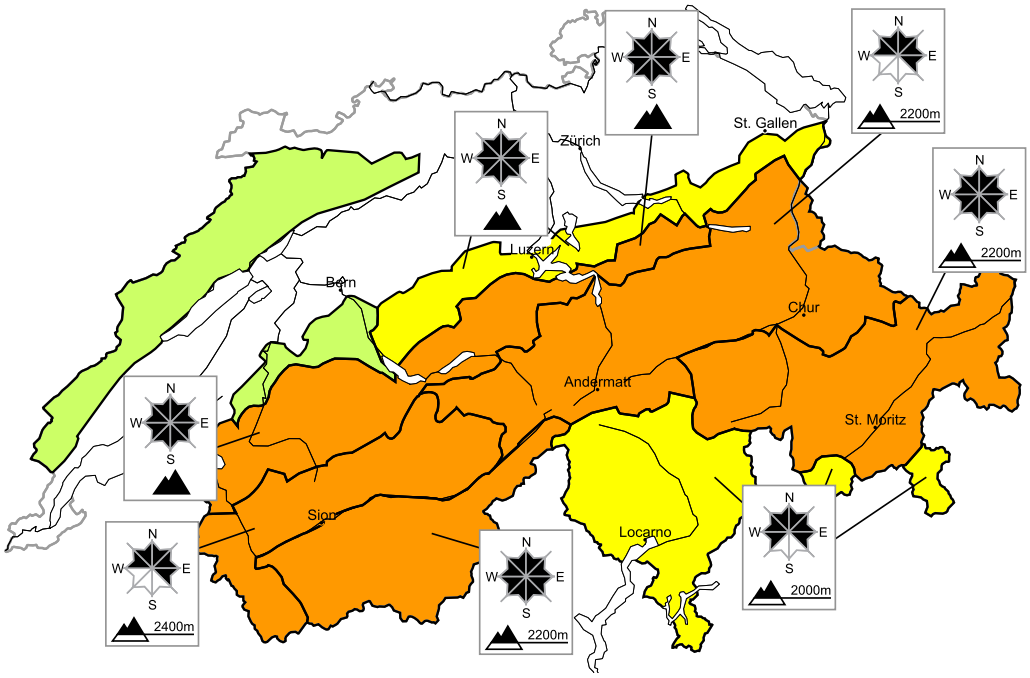
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 5.2.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 5.2.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

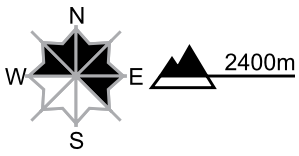
updated on 5.2.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

New snow and wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs of the last few days represent the main danger. Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can also be released in deep layers and reach large size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow and at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Wet and full-depth avalanches

In all aspects medium-sized to large wet and gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2400 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

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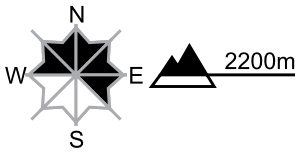
region B — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



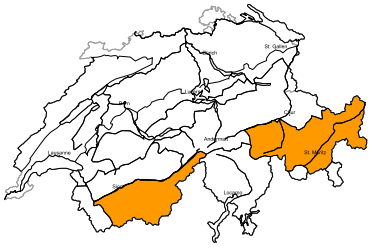
Danger description

Fresh and older wind slabs represent the main danger. Avalanches can in some places be released by a single winter sport participant and reach medium size. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Gliding avalanches

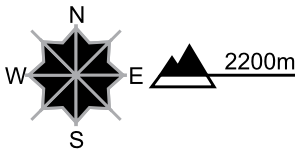
In all aspects medium-sized to large gliding avalanches are to be expected below approximately 2200 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered occasionally.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



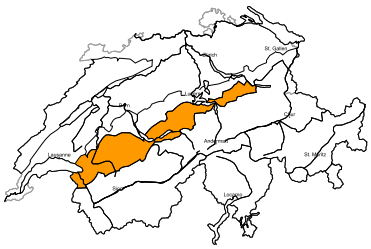
Danger description

In isolated cases avalanches can be triggered in deep layers of the snowpack 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.
The wind slabs of Wednesday are in some cases still prone to triggering.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

Gliding avalanches

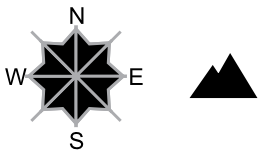
In particular on steep sunny slopes gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered occasionally.

region D — Level 3, considerable



Wet and full-depth avalanches, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

More medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large wet and gliding avalanches are possible. 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.

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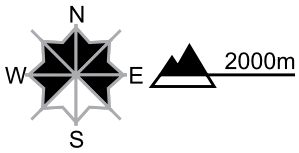
region E — Level 2, moderate

Dry avalanches: no distinct avalanche problem

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in some cases be released in near-surface layers and reach medium size.
Backcountry touring calls for careful route selection.

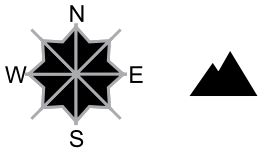
Gliding avalanches

Especially on very steep slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2000 m.

region F — Level 2, moderate

Gliding avalanches

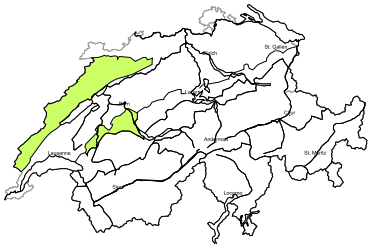
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Individual small to medium-sized gliding avalanches are possible. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.
Individual avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found especially on extremely steep north facing slopes.

region G — Level 1, low



Gliding avalanches

Isolated gliding avalanches and wet snow slides are possible. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 4.2.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

The snowpack at intermediate and higher altitudes is above average in depth. Particularly above approxiamtely 2200 m, marked weak layers are to be found deeply embedded inside the snowpack. Inside these layers in places where the snow is relatively shallow and in transitions from shallow to deep snow, avalanches can still be triggered in places. Avalanches which fracture in these layers can sweep away the entire snow cover and grow to large size. On the southern flank of the Alps the snowpack structuring is more favourable. Fractures deeper down in the old snowpack are no longer likely.
As a result of strong-velocity winds in some places at higher altitudes over the last few days, snowdrift accumulations have been generated. In addition, particularly in ridgeline terrain and in pass areas, small, trigger-sensitive snowdrift accumulations have been generated by the increasingly strong foehn wind on Friday.
Below approximately 2000 m, the snowpack manifests marked effects of warmth and rainfall. Particularly on the northern flank of the Alps and in the Lower Valais, medium and large-sized gliding avalanches continue to be possible.

Observed weather on Thursday, 04.02.2021

In the early part of the night, a small amount of additional precipitation was registered over widespread areas. The snowfall level descended from initially above 2000 m down to 1500 m. In the latter part of the night skies were predominantly clear. During the daytime it was quite sunny in the eastern regions in spite of high-altitude cloudbanks; in the western regions skies were predominantly overcast.

Fresh snow
Above 2000 m:
· northern flank of the Alps, Lower Valais: 5 to 15 cm;
· in the other regions of Switzerland, less; or else, it remained dry.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, in the western regions +3 °C, and in the eastern and the southern regions, +1 °C.

Wind
Winds were westerly to southwesterly, in the nocturnal hours blowing at moderate to strong velocity, during the daytime at light to moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Friday, 05.02.2021

The nighttime skies in northern regions will be predominantly clear, in the southern regions overcast. During the daytime it will be quite sunny, in spite of high-altitude cloudbanks in the northern regions. In the southern regions and in the Jura region, skies will be overcast, but it will remain dry.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, +5 °C in the northern regions and -1 °C in the southern regions.

Wind
Winds will be blowing at moderate strength from southwesterly directions, in the afternoon intensifying in strength; in the foehn-exposed valleys of the north, a moderate-strength foehn wind will be blowing.

Avalanche bulletin for Friday, 5 February 2021

Outlook through Sunday, 07.02.2021

On Saturday in the northern regions it will be quite sunny as a result of foehn wind influence, and unusually mild. The zero-degree level will lie at nearly 3000 m. In the southern and the furthermost western regions skies will be predominantly overcast but it will remain dry. During the nighttime hours on Saturday and during the day on Sunday, skies in western and southern regions will be overcast, accompanied by precipitation. The snowfall level will descend from approximately 2000 m down to 1000 m. In the eastern regions skies will initially be bright, due to foehn impact, subsequently will become increasingly overcast during the course of the day.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches will continue to diminish on Saturday. On Sunday the danger will increase on the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom as a result of snowfall; in the other regions, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly. The danger of gliding avalanches will remain upright.