Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 17 February 2021

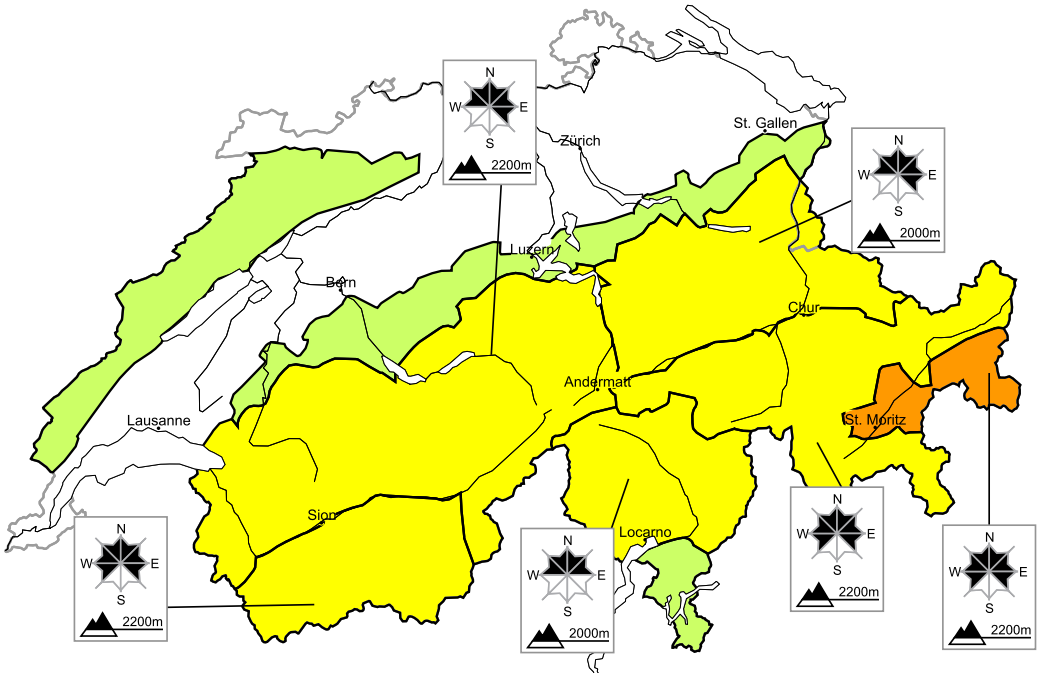
17.2.2021, 07:44

In Grisons a considerable avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 17.2.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 17.2.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

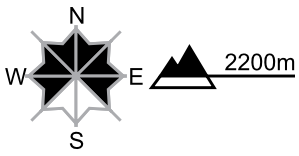
updated on 17.2.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can be triggered in deep layers of the snowpack and reach large size. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible in isolated cases. The avalanche prone locations are rather rare but are barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. Caution is to be exercised in particular at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack, as well as in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow. The avalanche situation is a little more favourable in highly frequented off-piste terrain. In addition the fresh and older wind slabs are prone to triggering in some cases.
Defensive route selection is required. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

On very steep slopes moist snow slides are possible as a consequence of warming during the day.

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

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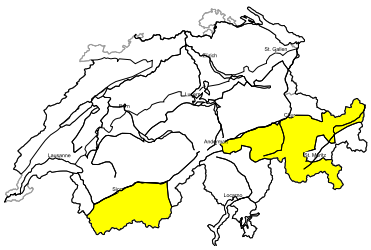
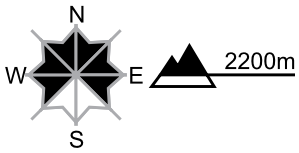
region B — Level 2, moderate



Old snow, wind slabs

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 barely recognisable. Caution is to be exercised in particular in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow, as well as in little used terrain.
In addition the fresh and older wind slabs are prone to triggering in some cases.
Defensive route selection is advisable. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended.

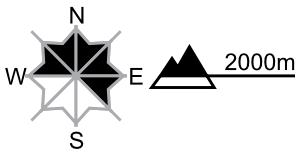
Wet avalanches as day progresses

On very steep slopes moist snow slides are possible as a consequence of warming during the day.

region C — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and older wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. They are mostly small. In high Alpine regions the avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and larger.
Avalanches can additionally in very isolated cases be released in the weakly bonded old snow. This applies in particular in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow in little used backcountry terrain.
Ski touring calls for careful route selection.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

On very steep slopes moist snow slides are possible as a consequence of warming during the day.

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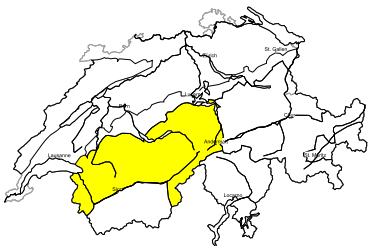
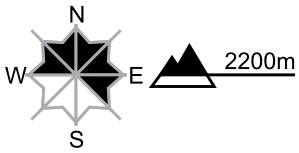
region D — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and older wind slabs are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. They are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. They are mostly small. In high Alpine regions the avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and larger.
Avalanches can additionally in very isolated cases be released in the weakly bonded old snow. This applies in particular in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow in little used backcountry terrain.
Ski touring calls for careful route selection.

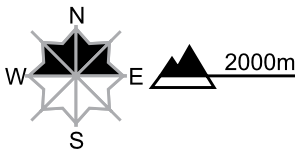
Wet avalanches as day progresses

On very steep slopes moist snow slides are possible as a consequence of warming during the day. On steep grassy slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible.

region E — Level 2, moderate

Dry avalanches: no distinct avalanche problem

Avalanche prone locations



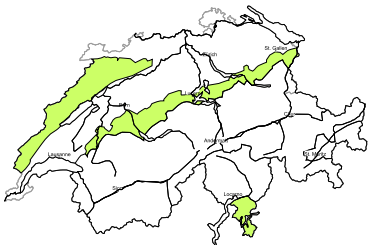
Danger description

The avalanche conditions are generally favourable. Avalanches can in some cases be released in near-surface layers of the snowpack. Caution is to be exercised in particular on very steep slopes in little used backcountry terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for careful route selection.

Gliding avalanches

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

region F — Level 1, low



Dry avalanches: no distinct avalanche problem

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Wind slabs can be released in isolated cases. 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.

Wet avalanches

Individual mostly small gliding avalanches and moist snow slides are possible.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 16.2.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

The significant warming was accompanied on Tuesday by the release of numerous moist snow, surface avalanches.
On Tuesday night in the north, some further fresh snow and snow drift accumulations will be transported. The snow drift accumulations will sometimes be deposited on an unfavourable old snowpack.
In southern Valais and in Grisons, distinct weak layers exist deep in the snowpack in all aspects; they are to be found above 2200 m on north facing slopes and a little higher on south facing slopes. These weak layers are mostly well covered by snow and can now be released by people only in isolated cases. In such instances, however, the avalanches release the entire snowpack and reach large size. On the northern flank of the Alps, such weak layers are less prevalent and mostly even better covered. In Ticino, the bonding of the snowpack is more favourable, and fractures are unlikely to occur in deep layers of old snow.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 16.02.2021

During the night a little snow fell in the north above approximately 1500 m. During the day it was mostly sunny in the Jura, the western Prealps and the south, but cloud persisted longer in the other regions.

Fresh snow
By the time the precipitation ceased on Tuesday morning, the following amounts of snow had fallen:
· Northern Alpine ridge from the Sustenhorn into the St Gallen Alps, northern Grisons: 5 to 10 cm
· Elsewhere: either a few flakes or it remained dry

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between +4 °C in the west and +1 °C in the east

Wind
· In the Alps, moderate to strong westerly, easing during the day
· In the south, moderate to strong from the southwest

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 17.02.2021

It will become a little colder again. In the north and in Valais on Tuesday night, a little snow will fall above 1200 to 1500 m. On Wednesday, cloud will persist in the northeast in the morning, otherwise it will be sunny.

Fresh snow
· During the night, a few centimetres over a wide area
· Dry in the south

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m: between -1 °C in the west and -4 °C in the east

Wind
· In the north during the night, strong from the west to southwest, easing during the day
· In the south along the main Alpine ridge, locally strong, otherwise light to moderate from the northwest

Outlook through Friday, 19.02.2021

As a consequence of a light south foehn, Thursday will be mostly sunny and mild in the mountains. On Thursday afternoon in the south and the Jura, cloud will build up, and during Thursday night in the Jura a few drops of rain could fall. Friday will be mostly sunny and mild again.
While the snow drift accumulations quickly stabilise, the old snowpack problem will persist, practically unchanged. On each of the two days, the danger of wet snow avalanches will increase as the day progresses.