Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 20 March 2021

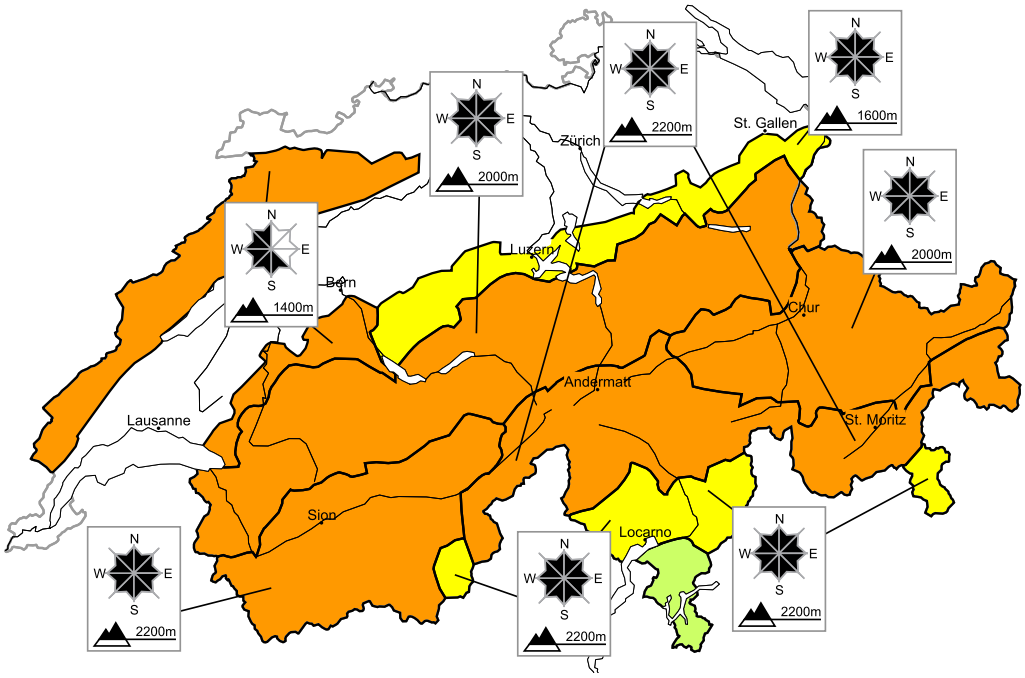
20.3.2021, 07:52

Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 20.3.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 20.3.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

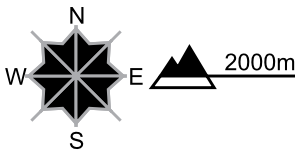
updated on 20.3.2021, 08:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can be released in near-surface layers and reach dangerously large size. This applies in particular on steep west, north and east facing slopes. Whumpfing sounds serve as an alarm indicating the danger.
As a consequence of a strengthening northeasterly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form in the course of the day at elevated altitudes. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.
Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Gliding avalanches

On steep east, south and west facing slopes gliding avalanches are possible, in particular below approximately 2000 m.

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

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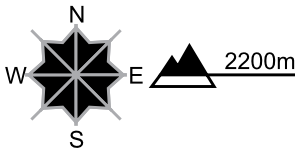
region B — Level 3, considerable

Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



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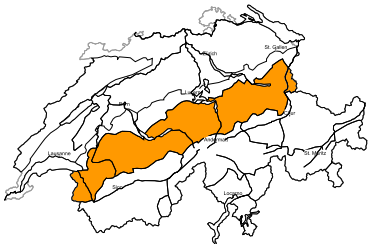
Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Gliding avalanches

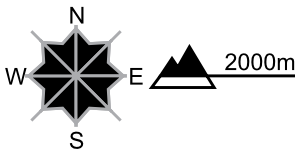
On steep east, south and west facing slopes gliding avalanches are possible, in particular below approximately 2400 m.

region C — Level 3, considerable



Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can in some cases be released in near-surface layers and reach large size. This applies in particular on steep west, north and east facing slopes.
As a consequence of a strengthening bise wind, mostly small wind slabs will form in the course of the day. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.
Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Gliding avalanches

On steep east, south and west facing slopes gliding avalanches are possible, in particular below approximately 2000 m.

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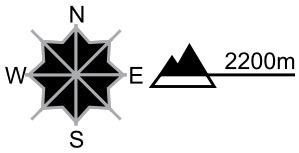
region D — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

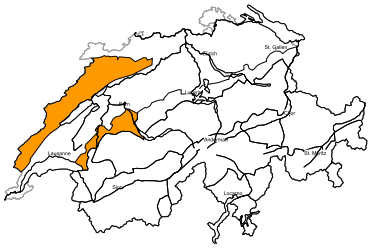
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

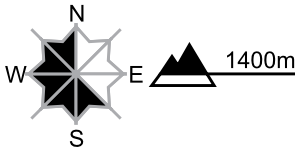
The somewhat older wind slabs can be released easily in some cases in particular on shady slopes, especially at their margins.
As a consequence of a strengthening northeasterly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form in the course of the day. They are to be avoided in steep terrain. Mostly avalanches are medium-sized.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region E — Level 3, considerable



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



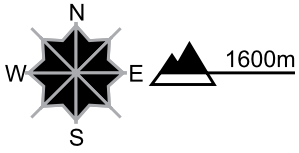
Danger description

As a consequence of a strong bise wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form. The fresh wind slabs can be released even by a single winter sport participant.
Ski touring and snowshoe hiking call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region F — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a strengthening bise wind, mostly small wind slabs will form in the course of the day. These can in some cases be released easily. They are to be avoided in particular in steep terrain. Careful route selection is required.

Gliding avalanches

On steep east, south and west facing slopes gliding avalanches are possible.

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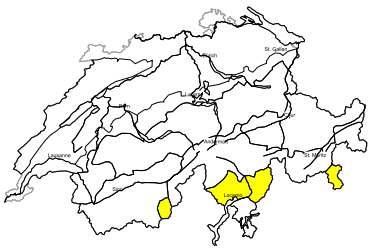
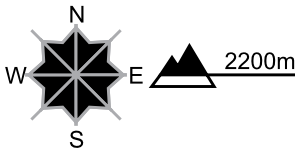
region G — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs are in some cases prone to triggering. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. Careful route selection is important. 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.

region H — Level 1, low

No distinct avalanche problem

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Even a small avalanche can sweep snow sport participants along and give rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 19.3.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

The enormous amounts of fresh snow and freshly-generated snowdrifts of this week are gradually settling and consolidating. Combs and knolls are frequently windblown down to the old snowpack surface, in bowls there are frequently lots of snowdrift accumulations. Beneath the fresh fallen snow and freshly generated snowdrifts there is a weak layer which is particularly marked on north-facing slopes. There, more than anywhere else, as well as inside the near-to-surface layers of fresh snow and snowdrifts, avalanche triggerings are possible. As a result of the intensifying northeasterly winds, the loosely-packed uppermost layer of snow will be transported and new snowdrift accumulations will be generated which will be prone to triggering.

Observed weather on Friday, 19.03.2021

In the furthermost southern regions skies were frequently overcast, accompanied by snow showers extending down to low lying areas. In the other regions of Switzerland it was quite sunny over widespread areas. In the Jura region, heavy cloud cover moved in during the afternoon, in the eastern Jura light snow showers set in.

Fresh snow
In Sotto Ceneri, 5 to 10 cm.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between -7 °C in the western regions and -11 °C in the eastern regions.

Wind
in the Jura region and the western Prealps, a moderate bise wind will prevail; elsewhere mostly light winds.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 20.03.2021

On the northern flank of the Alps and in Grisons, skies will frequently be overcast, from place to place a small amount of snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas. In the western sector of the northern flank of the Alps it will be partly sunny, in the Valais and the southern regions predominantly so. As a result of northeasterly winds it is expected to remain cold.

Fresh snow
In the eastern Jura region, in the central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, from Monte Rosa as far as Simplon Pass, as well as in Grisons: as much as 5 cm.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between -8 °C in the southwestern regions and -12 °C in the northeastern regions.

Wind
- in the Jura regions, Prealps: moderate to strong bise wind;
- at high altitudes: during the nocturnal hours light to moderate northeasterly winds, intensifying early on Saturday morning to moderte-to-strong velocity;
- in the southern regions: during the course of the day moderate to strong-velocity northerly foehn wind extending down to the valley floors.

Outlook through Monday, 22.03.2021

In the Jura region, in the Prealps, as well as in the central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps and in Grisons, skies will frequently be overcast below approximately 2500 m and a small amount of snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas. In these regions it will be intermittently sunny in high-alpine regions. In the western and southern regions it will be predominantly sunny. It is expected to remain cold. In the north a predominantly moderate-strength bise wind will be blowing. At heightened altitudes a strong-velocity northeasterly wind will be blowing, in the southern regions a moderate-to-strong velocity northerly foehn wind will prevail.
Avalanche danger levels are expected to increase somewhat as a result of the expanding snowdrift accumulations. In the furthermost southern regions, avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly.