

## Considerable avalanche danger over widespread areas in the southern regions

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### Avalanche danger

#### Upper Valais sector of Main Alpine Ridge along the Italian border, central sector of southern flank of the Alps, Main Alpine Ridge from the Rheinwald region into the Bernina region

At elevated altitudes avalanche danger is considerable (Danger Level 3). The danger stems from the fresh fallen snow and the weak old snow. Avalanche prone locations are to be found on west-facing to north-facing to east-facing slopes above approximately 2200 m more than anywhere else. In the high alpine regions danger zones are to be found in all aspects. Particularly on Sunday night and during the daytime hours on Monday, large-sized naturally triggered avalanches are possible. This will be the case especially in the Simplon region as well as in the Binntal and the western part of Ticino. Naturally triggered avalanche activity is expected to decrease on Tuesday. On both days, avalanches can be triggered even by one sole winter sports enthusiast, including large-sized releases. Skiing and snowshoe tours in backcountry terrain require a great deal of experience in the assessment of avalanche danger on-site. As a result of the higher temperatures and solar radiation particularly on Tuesday, moist slides and moist-snow avalanches triggering from the fresh fallen snow can be expected during the course of the day.

#### Northern Alpine Ridge, remaining regions of the Valais and Grisons

Weak old snow and snowdrifts constitute the major danger. This is the case on west-facing to north-facing to southeast-facing slopes above approximately 2200 m more than anywhere else. Avalanches can be triggered even by one single person in some places, including medium-sized releases. The avalanche prone locations are to be found particularly in ridgeline terrain, in gullies and behind sudden discontinuities in the terrain. On steep slopes, the snowdrift accumulations should be circumvented whenever possible. Apart from the risks of being buried in snow masses, the danger of being swept along and forced to take a fall need to be taken into consideration.

#### Remaining regions of the Swiss Alps

Weak old snow and snowdrifts are the major danger. This is the case on west-facing to north-facing to southeast-facing slopes above approximately 2000 m more than anywhere else. Avalanches can be triggered by one single person in some places, these releases are generally small-sized. The avalanche prone locations are to be found particularly in ridgeline terrain, in gullies and behind abrupt discontinuities in the terrain. The snowdrift accumulations should be assessed carefully in steep terrain. Apart from the risks of being buried in snow masses, the danger of being swept along and forced to take a fall need to be taken into consideration.

## Snow and weather

### Snowpack

There is still only a small amount of snow on the ground. The snow depths in the furthestmost western regions are average at 2500 m, in the other regions of Switzerland generally below average. In the southern regions and in the central sector of the northern flank of the Alps, snow depths are far below average. As a result of southerly winds, fresh snowdrift accumulations have been generated at elevated altitudes. The new fallen snow in the southern regions as well as the snowdrift accumulations in the northern regions, have been deposited on top of a relatively unfavourable old snowpack surface over widespread areas, in some places the snowfall has blanketed surface hoar.

### Weather review to Saturday, 3 December

On Saturday in the central Valais and Grisons, it was partly sunny. In the other regions of Switzerland skies were heavily overcast on the weekend for the most part. In the southern regions, precipitation set in during the course of the day, which then intensified during the course of Saturday night, subsequently slackened off somewhat on Sunday afternoon. The snowfall level ascended from 1000 to approximately 1500 m. The southerly winds were frequently blowing at moderate strength, at strong velocity at high altitudes on the northern Alpine Ridge on Saturday.

Between Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered above approximately 1800 m:

- Simplon region, Binntal, northwestern part of Ticino: 40 to 60 cm;
- remaining parts of the Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge along the Italian border, remaining parts of Ticino, Moesano: 20 to 40 cm;
- remaining parts of the Main Alpine Ridge from Zermatt into the Bernina region, Upper Engadine: 10 to 20 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimetres, or else it remained dry.

### Weather outlook through Tuesday, 6 December

On Monday, skies will be heavily overcast to begin with, precipitation is anticipated over widespread areas. The snowfall level will lie between 800 and 1100 m. During the course of the day it will become increasingly sunny in the western regions. In the eastern regions the precipitation will come to an end on Monday evening. On Tuesday it will be predominantly sunny in the mountains, and somewhat less cold (midday temperature at 2000 m will be -3 °C). Winds on Sunday night will still be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from southerly directions. On Monday the winds will shift to westerly and be blowing at moderate strength at high altitudes, predominantly at light strength south of the Main Alpine Ridge.

Between Sunday afternoon and Monday evening, the following amounts of fresh snow are expected:

- Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge from the Simplon region into southern Goms, Ticino, Moesano, Val Bregaglia, Corvatsch, Bernina region: 20 to 30 cm;
- central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, remaining parts of Gotthard region: 10 to 15 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland: 5 to 10 cm.

## Outlook

On Wednesday it will be quite sunny, accompanied by cloudbanks. On Thursday it will be partly sunny to start with, subsequently during the course of the day skies will become increasingly cloudy from the west, accompanied by light precipitation in the western and the southern regions. The snowfall level will lie at 1300 m.

The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to decrease, but only incrementally on shady slopes. On steep sunny slopes, moist snowslides can be expected during the course of the day, particularly in the regions of the south where snowfall has been heaviest.