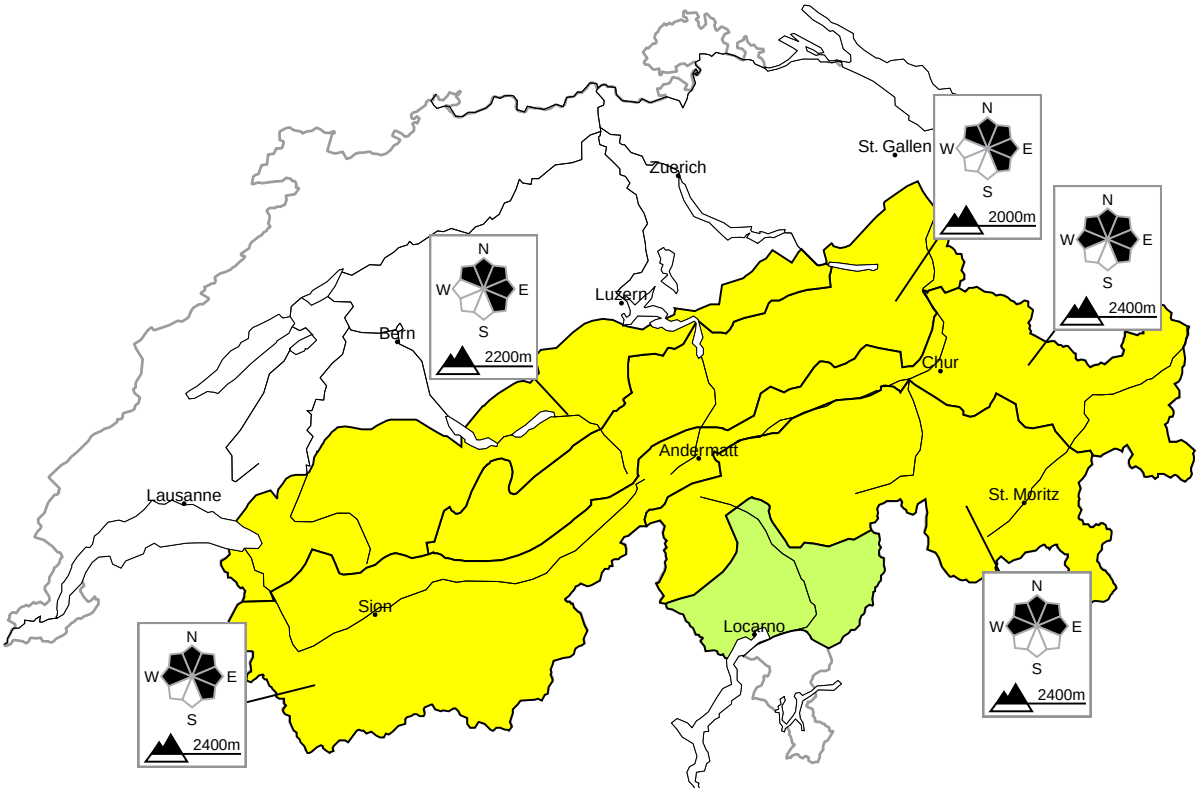
Avalanche bulletin for Thursday, 5. January 2023

Moderate avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area. Wind slabs and weakly bonded old snow require caution

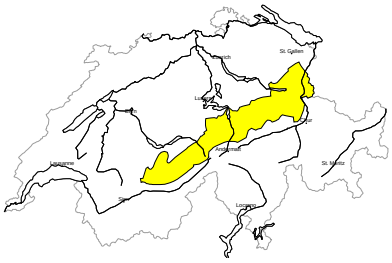
Edition: 5.1.2023, 08:00 / Next update: 5.1.2023, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 5.1.2023, 08:00

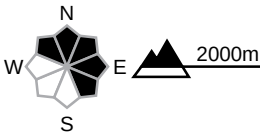


region A | **Moderate, Level 2+**



Snow drift, Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The avalanche danger will increase during the day. As a consequence of new snow and a sometimes strong wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Additionally to some extent avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 2400 m. They are difficult to recognise. In high Alpine regions these avalanche prone locations are to be found in all aspects. Defensive route selection is advisable.

Danger levels 1 low 2 moderate 3 considerable 4 high 5 very high

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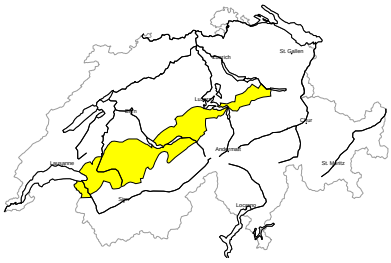
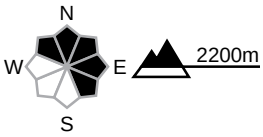
region B — Moderate, Level 2=



Snow drift, Old snow

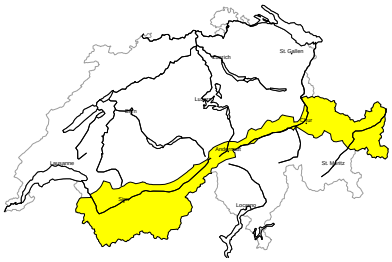
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

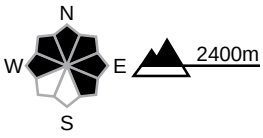
The avalanche danger will increase during the day. As a consequence of new snow and wind, wind slabs will form. These are rather small but prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain.
Additionally in some places avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 2400 m. They are difficult to recognise. In high Alpine regions these avalanche prone locations are to be found in all aspects. Defensive route selection is recommended.

region C — Moderate, Level 2=



Old snow

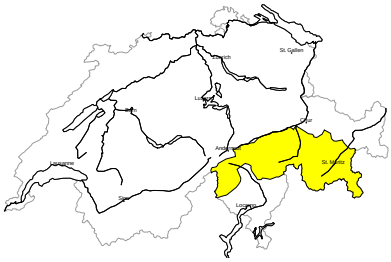
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

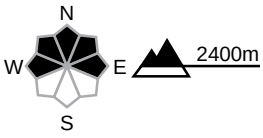
In some places avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach dangerously large size. The prevalence of the avalanche prone locations will increase with altitude. They are difficult to recognise. In high Alpine regions these avalanche prone locations are to be found in all aspects.
In the course of the day mostly small wind slabs will form. They are prone to triggering.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for defensive route selection.

region D — Moderate, Level 2-



Old snow, Snow drift

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

In isolated cases avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow and reach medium size in some cases. The avalanche prone locations are rare but are barely recognisable.
As a consequence of a strengthening northerly wind, mostly small wind slabs will form in the course of the day. These are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. They are prone to triggering.
Careful route selection is recommended.

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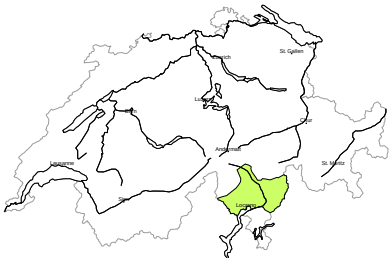
region E

Low, Level 1



Snow drift

As a consequence of a strengthening northerly wind, small wind slabs will form in the course of the day in particular in gullies and bowls and behind abrupt changes in the terrain. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence especially in extremely steep terrain. Even a small avalanche can sweep snow sport participants along and give rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 4.1.2023, 17:00

Snowpack

Below approximately 2200 m there is extraordinarily little snow on the ground for this juncture of the season, at low altitudes there is no snow whatsoever. Even above 2200 m the snow depths are below average over widespread areas; only in the Valais do the snow depths correspond to long-term average values.
The generally shallow snowpack below 2200 to 2400 m manifests influence from higher temperatures and rainfall and as a result of the melt-freeze crusts is also riddled with expansively metamorphosed (faceted) crystal layers. At elevated altitudes the more deeply embedded layers inside the snowpqack are frequently faceted and loosely-packed. This applies to west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes above 2200 to 2400 m and to south-facing slopes above approximately 2700 m.

Observed weather review Wednesday, 04.01.2023

On Tuesday evening in the northeastern regions there was a small amount of snowfall, thereafter the nocturnal skies were clear in all regions of Switzerland. In early morning it was partly sunny, before clouds swiftly moved in from the north.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, +1 °C.

Wind
Winds were predominantly westerly, blowing at moderate strength.

Weather forecast through Thursday, 05.01.2023

Skies are expected to be heavily overcast. Above 1700 to 2000 m snowfall is anticipated, most of it in the northeastern regions. South of the Main Alpine Ridge it will be predominantly sunny as a result of northerly winds.

Fresh snow
It is expected that by the end of this period of precipitation on Thursday afternoon, the follow amounts of fresh fallen snow will be registered above approximately 2200 m:
- on the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Berner Oberland into the Alpstein region: 10 to 20 cm;
- in the remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps: 5 to 10 cm;
- in the remaining regions of Switzerland, less; in the southern regions and in the Upper Engadine it will remain dry.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, +1 °C in the northern regions and +4 °C in the furthermost southern regions.

Wind
- Winds during the nighttime hours on the northern flank of the Alps and in general at elevated altitudes will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from westerly directions;
- winds during the daytime hours at elevated altitudes and in the southern regions will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from northwesterly directions.

Outlook through Saturday, 07.01.2023

On both days it will be predominantly sunny and mild in the mountains. On Saturday in the eastern Alpine valleys, southerly foehn winds are expected to arise and then transport the new fallen snow on Thursday.
In general the avalanche danger levels are expected to incrementally decrease. On Saturday avalanche danger will increase somewhat in the eastern foehn-impacted regions as a result of the freshly generated snowdrift accumulations.