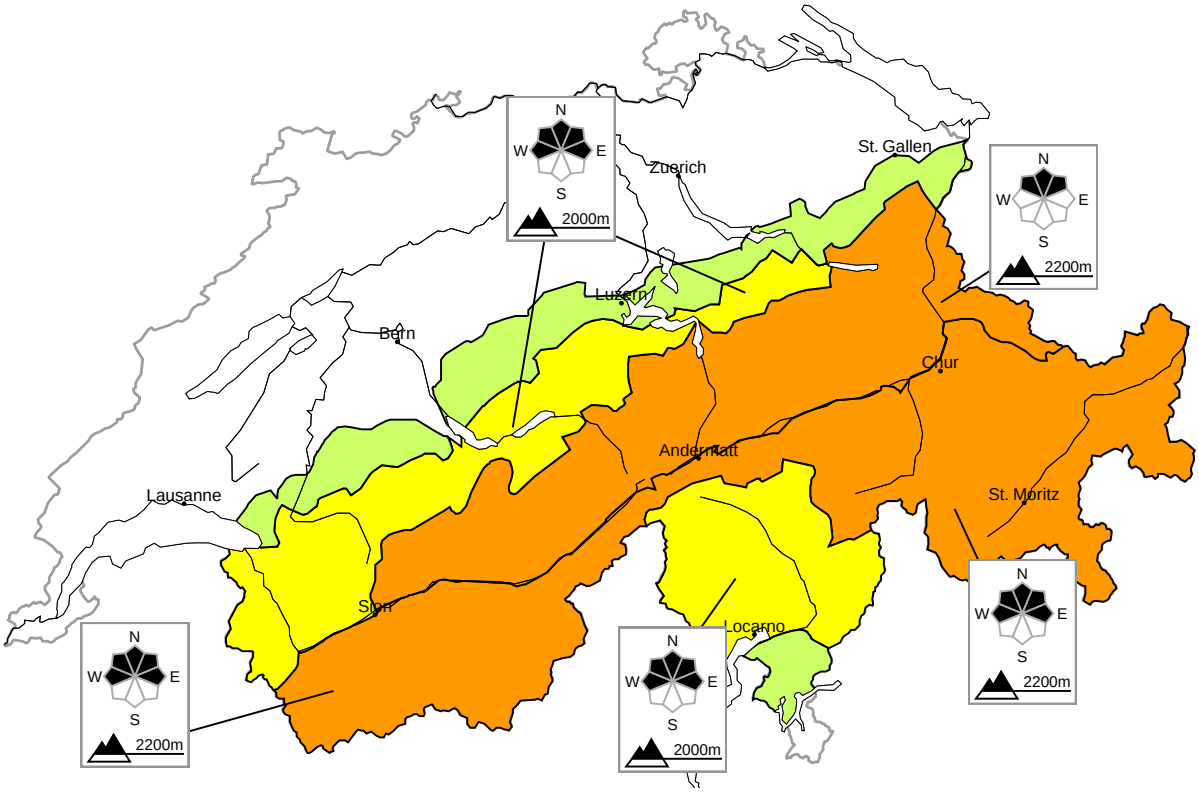
Avalanche bulletin for Saturday, 18. March 2023

Weakly bonded old snow on north facing slopes. Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

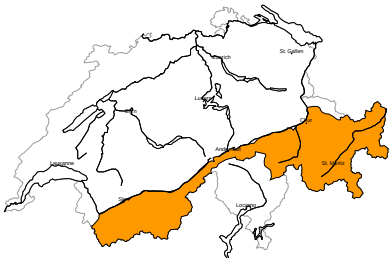
Edition: 18.3.2023, 08:00 / Next update: 18.3.2023, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 18.3.2023, 08:00

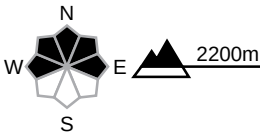


region A | **Considerable, Level 3=**



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Even single snow sport participants can release avalanches. Avalanches can be released in the weakly bonded old snow and reach large size in some cases. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack can indicate the danger. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible.
As a consequence of southwesterly wind, mostly small wind slabs will form in high Alpine regions. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.
Defensive route selection is required, especially on steep north facing slopes.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

In particular on steep sunny slopes medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large wet and gliding avalanches are possible.

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

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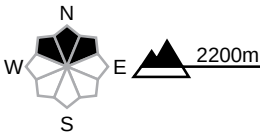
region B — Considerable, Level 3=

Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



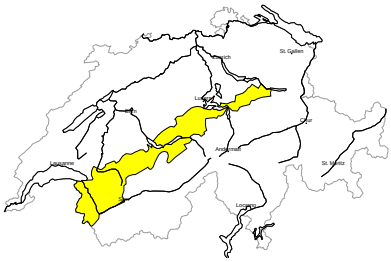
Danger description

In some places avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow and reach large size in some cases. These avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular on steep north facing slopes and in areas where the snow cover is rather shallow. Remotely triggered avalanches are possible.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution. Defensive route selection is required, especially on steep north facing slopes.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

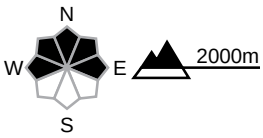
In particular on steep sunny slopes medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large wet and gliding avalanches are possible.

region C — Moderate, Level 2=



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



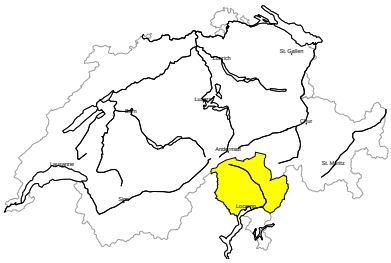
Danger description

Avalanches can in some places be released by people and reach medium size. Additionally in very isolated cases avalanches can also be released in the old snowpack. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on steep north facing slopes above approximately 2200 m. Careful route selection is recommended.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

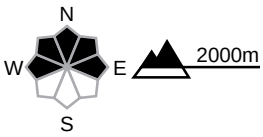
As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation small to medium-sized moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

region D — Moderate, Level 2=



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The somewhat older wind slabs are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack on shady slopes. They are in some cases prone to triggering. 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 as day progresses

As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation small to medium-sized moist snow slides and avalanches are possible.

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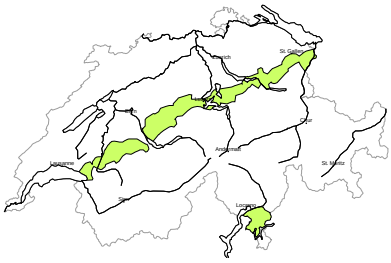
region E

Low, Level 1



Dry avalanches: no distinct avalanche problem

Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Wet avalanches as day progresses

As a consequence of warming during the day and solar radiation wet snow slides are possible.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 17.3.2023, 17:00

Snowpack

On north-facing slopes above 2200 m more than anywhere else, expansively metamorphosed (faceted) weak layers deeply embedded inside the snow cover are evident over far-reaching areas. In the Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps these weak layers are generally blanketed over by thick layers of fresher snow. Avalanches there can fracture down to these expansively metamorphosed (faceted) layers in some places and subsequently grow to large size. In Grisons and in the northern Ticino these weak layers are located closer to the surface of the snowpack. Particularly in Grisons they are still easily triggered.
In the high alpine regions, predominantly small-sized snowdrift accumulations will be generated by southwesterly winds on Saturday. As a consequence of solar radiaiton and the daytime cycle of rising temperatures, wet-snow and gliding avalanches will be possible on steep sunny slopes.

Observed weather review Friday, 17.03.2023

It was quite sunny accompanied by high-altitude cloudbanks. In the northern regions it was extremely mild.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, +9 °C in the northern regions and 0 °C in the southern regions. The zero-degree level lay at 3300 m in the northern regions.

Wind
Winds were blowing at light to moderate strength, at moderate to strong velocity in some places at the heights of the Jura as well as in the Gotthard region, from southwesterly directions.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 18.03.2023

On Friday night skies are expected to be predominantly clear. During the daytime hours on Saturday it will be generally sunny to start with. During the afternoon cloud cover will move in from the west to an increasing degre, but it is expected to still remain dry.

Fresh snow
-

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between +2 °C in the western regions and +5 °C in the eastern regions, and 0 °C in the southern regions. The zero-degree level is expected to descend to approximately 2500 m in the northern regions.

Wind
Winds will be blowing at light to moderate strength, at moderate velocity in the high alpine regions, from southwesterly directions.

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Outlook through Monday, 20.03.2023

On Sunday, variably cloudy to heavily overcast skies will prevail accompanied by intermittent light snow showers in the western and in the northern regions. In the southern regions it will be partly sunny during the afternoon. The snowfall level will lie at 1500 m to 1700 m. On Sunday night, skies will be predominantly overcast in the eastern regions in particular and above 1400 m a small amount of snowfall is anticipated from place to place. During the daytime hours on Monday it will be predominantly sunny and the zero-degree level will ascend to approximately 2400 m. Winds on both days will be blowing at light to moderate strength from southwesterly directions.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to incrementally decrease on both days.
On Sunday the danger of wet-snow avalanches will decrease as a consequence of dropping temperatures. On Monday the danger will slightly increase again during the course of the day.