

Avalanche News

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Monday, 03.11.2008, at 15:00



FORECAST FOR PENTECOST WEEKEND: GENERALLY FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS IN MORNING, INCREASE DURING THE DAY

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger continues to be contingent on the time of day and the altitude. Due to the dry air masses and sparkling clear nights, the snowpack can consolidate well. Thus, the avalanche danger in the morning, at least above approximately 2000 m, is low. In the course of the day, the danger level rises. This first affects lower altitudes and extremely steep east facing slopes, towards midday it affects all aspects. Backcountry skiers and freeriders must exercise great caution towards the drastic loss of firmness of the snowpack, caused by the softening of the melt-freeze crust and by its increasing wetness. After midday, wet sluffs can be unleashed in extremely steep terrain, which can attain large size on their way towards the valley. In the inneralpine regions of the Stubai, Ötztal, Zillertal and Tux Alps and in central East Tyrol, there is ongoing trigger-sensitivity on very steep, west to north to east facing slopes, particularly below about 2800 m. During the afternoon at latest, even minimum additional loading can trigger large sized avalanches. Isolated natural, including large sized, avalanches are also possible in those regions which can put exposed transportation routes at risk.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack consolidated well from Wednesday, 7.5, to Thursday, 8.5. The snowpack surface has a 10-cm thick melt-freeze crust capable of bearing loads, except in forest vicinity. In flat and/or shady terrain above 3000 m, on the other hand, there is a breakable crust. In general, the snowpack below about 2400 m is thoroughly wet in all aspects up to about 2800 m. In inneralpine and central East Tyrolean regions, in addition, particularly on west to north to east facing slopes below about 2800 m, (in wind-protected areas even above that altitude) a layer of depth hoar near the ground is still a potential bed surface for slab avalanches. This demands great caution.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

The weather will remain utterly unproblematic in the northern and central Alps. On the southern flank of the Alps to the Carnic Alps, scattered showers are possible during the afternoon. Temperatures at 2000 m will be plus 3 to 10 degrees, at 3000 m minus 4 to plus 1 degree. Light winds will prevail. On Pentecost weekend it will be quite sunny and mild, with cloud buildup in the course of the day.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

On the weekend, higher humidity is expected temporarily, which will cause more rapid loss of snowpack firmness in the course of the day. In the afternoons, particularly below about 2600 m, the danger level will be "considerable".

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe