

# Avalanche News

## of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

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## ESCALATING AVALANCHE DANGER AMID SNOWFALL AND WINDS

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### AVALANCHE DANGER

The combination of strong winds and snowfall in western North Tyrol will give rise to heightened avalanche danger along the Main Alpine Ridge above 2500 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations in those regions, particularly on west to north to east facing steep slopes, can easily be triggered in the form of slab avalanches by single backcountry skiers or freeriders. Typical for the early winter season, such areas are to be found primarily where a cohesive old snowpack was already present, which then serves as a bed surface. The higher, steeper and shadier the terrain, the more probable such areas are. As the snowfall becomes heavier, even isolated natural avalanches can be unleashed in the course of the day from extremely steep, shady slopes above approximately 2500 m. In the remaining regions of North Tyrol, particularly in the far west and north, the new fallen snow will begin to slide on very steep grassy slopes at earliest during the evening. In East Tyrol the conditions are more favourable, although even there freshly formed snowdrift on shady, steep slopes above approximately 2300 m should be avoided whenever possible.

### SNOW LAYERING

Since the last snowfall a week ago, the area wide snowpack has receded almost to the 3000 m level on sunny slopes. On shady slopes there is a somewhat thicker, area wide snowpack above approximately 2500 m. The snow surface has been exposed to low temperatures for a longer period, which means that it is expected to bond poorly with the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations on west to north to east facing slopes. In addition, there is also a fundament of depth hoar near the ground, which at least in high alpine regions formed in early winter, and which also could serve as a bed surface on very steep, particularly shady slopes.

### ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

The cold front of a dominant low pressure zone over Scandinavia is expected to reach the Alps and deliver a massive and stormy dose of winter to the northern flank of the Alps. Fog, snow showers and very stormy conditions including gale force gusts on the northern edge of the Alps will accompany the entrance of winter to the mountains of North Tyrol. Somewhat south of the Main Alpine Ridge, bright skies are anticipated amid northerly foehn winds. Temperatures at 2000 m will be minus 2 to minus 9 degrees, at 3000 m minus 8 to minus 17 degrees. Storm strength westerly winds are expected at high altitudes, which will shift to northwesterly during the afternoon.

### SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

At very least until the beginning of next week, backcountry skiers and freeriders in glacier ski areas must exercise great caution towards avalanche hazards. The next avalanche situation information will be published tomorrow morning.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe