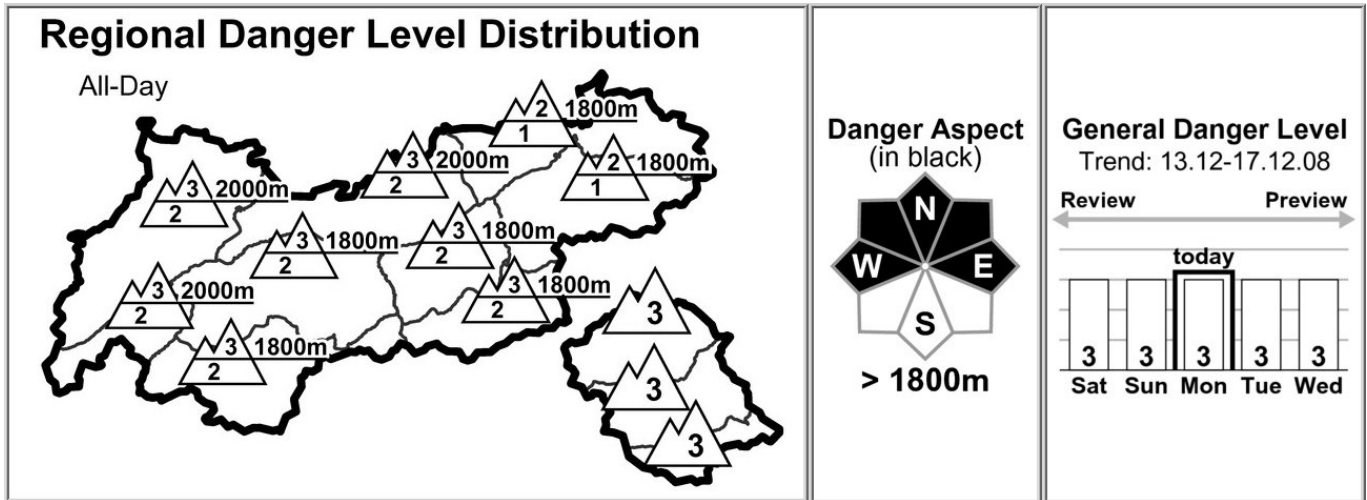


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Monday, 15.12.2008, at 07:30



FULL DEPTH SNOWSLIDES IN DEEP, FRESH SNOWDRIFT AT HIGH ALTITUDES

AVALANCHE DANGER

In East Tyrol, considerable avalanche danger prevails widespread. In North Tyrol, the danger generally depends on the altitude, however northwards tends to decrease incrementally. The major hazard in the regions with lots of snow stems from snowslides on steep, grassy slopes. If it starts to rain in lower lying areas in southern East Tyrol, such snowslides become ever more probable. Above the treeline, in addition, caution must be exercised towards freshly formed snowdrift accumulations throughout Tyrol. Weekend reports of avalanches in which people were involved corroborate these danger sources. With increasing altitude, the snowdrift accumulations become ever more frequent. They can be found particularly in areas adjacent to the ridge lines and on west to north to east facing steep slopes. For backcountry skiers and freeriders experienced in the assessment of avalanche danger, it is easy to recognize these hazardous spots and avoid them. They can be triggered through minimum additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

In southern East Tyrol, it has begun to snow again. By this morning there was 20 cm in Obertilliach, 8 cm in Lienz, towards the north only a few centimeters of new snow. North Tyrol remained dry, with the exception of the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps. Strong southerly foehn winds have given rise to massive snowdrift accumulations above the treeline over the last two days. The bonding to the generally loosely packed snow beneath these deposits is poor, by and large. Elsewhere, a layer of depth hoar near the ground can be found only in high alpine regions along the Main Alpine Ridge, which in isolated cases can serve as a bed surface for avalanches. In general, the amounts of snow are too great for a disturbance by a single backcountry skier or freerider to seem probable.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

A low pressure zone over the western Mediterranean continues to bring foehn to the northern flank of the Alps, while the southern flank forms a barrier for the congested cloudbanks. On the northern flank of the Alps, mountain summits are often cloud-free, due to the foehn; along the Main Alpine Ridge and on the southern flank of the Alps, fog is widespread. The intensity of the snowfall has receded slightly, in the Carnic and southeastern Dolomites it has subsided measurably. Temperature at 2000 m: zero degrees; at 3000 m: minus 7 degrees. Strong to stormy southerly winds at high altitudes.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

No significant change in the avalanche situation. If it rains at lower altitudes of southern East Tyrol, the danger of full depth snowslides will escalate.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe