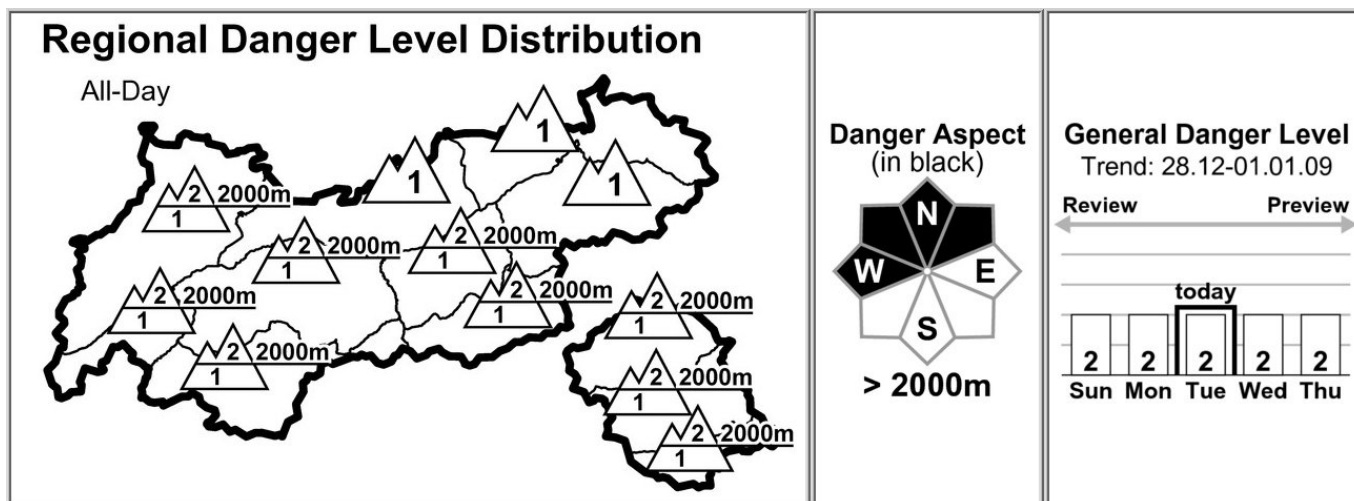


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 30.12.2008, at 07:30



FAVOURABLE TOURING CONDITIONS, EXCEPT FOR FRESH SNOWDRIFT ACCUMULATIONS AT HIGH ALTITUDES

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is subject to altitude: above approximately 2000 m, generally moderate danger prevails, below 2000 m the hazards are generally low. Avalanche prone locations for backcountry skiers and freeriders take the form of snowdrift accumulations which have arisen over the last week, many of which are in areas adjacent to ridge lines and below rocky edges above approximately 2000 m on west to north to northeast facing slopes. Such snowdrift accumulations are usually small, but occur increasingly frequently with rising altitude. In high alpine regions in particular, i.e. above approximately 3000 m, they can in isolated cases be triggered by minimum additional loading. Ordinarily, however, large additional loading is necessary to trigger them now. In addition, on extremely steep, shady slopes above approximately 2500 m, the old snowpack can be disturbed by large additional loading, particularly in transitions from little to lots of snow. Isolated full depth snowslides are still possible on very steep, grassy slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

On an exploration and maintenance tour in a military helicopter, we obtained a good overview of the snow layering in North Tyrol. All the snow profiles we took demonstrated stable layering. Below about 2000 m, the snowpack is compact and cohesive, often with a marked surface crust. The snowpack is becoming gradually faceted, due to the low temperatures. Primarily beneath hard crusts, a somewhat loosely packed layer then forms, which does not yet supply a bed surface for potential avalanches, however. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations at high altitudes are relatively poorly bonded with the old snowpack. On shady slopes above approximately 2500 m, and increasingly frequently above approximately 3000 m, there is a layer of depth hoar evident near the ground which, however, can be triggered only in exceptional circumstances.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather situation: Tyrol is still under the influence of a high pressure front with its center over Poland. Amid southerly air currents, mild air masses are being supplied to our mountains, while the cold air remains stagnant in the valleys. During the night on New Year's Eve, a small low pressure zone will brush Tyrol. Mountain weather today: excellent skiing and touring weather conditions. Brilliant sunshine, outstanding visibility, relatively mild temperatures. However, the southerly winds will be brisk in places. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 4 to plus 1 degree; at 3000 m: minus 5 degrees. Moderate southerly winds, brisk to strong gusts in places subject to foehn winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

To begin with, no significant change in the avalanche situation.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe