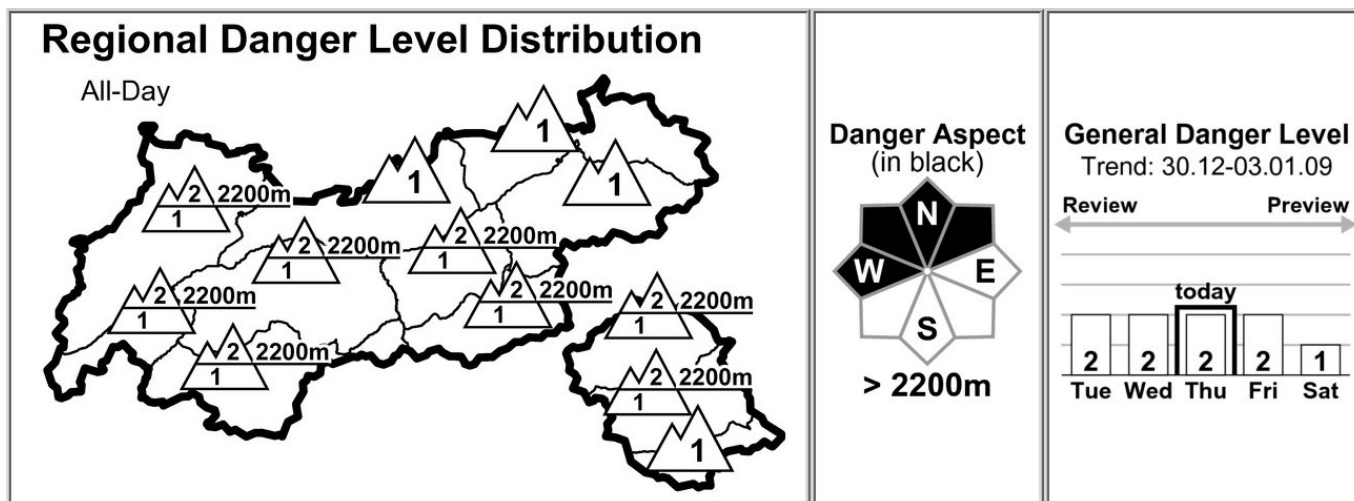


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Thursday, 01.01.2009, at 07:30



THE NEW YEAR BEGINS WITH GOOD TOURING CONDITIONS FOR BACKCOUNTRY SKIERS AND FREERIDERS.

AVALANCHE DANGER

Apart from the currently poor visibility, favourable touring conditions prevail throughout Tyrol. The avalanche danger below about 2200 m is low, above that altitude it is moderate in places. In general, avalanche hazards in the Northern Alps, Kitzbühel Alps and East Tyrolean Dolomites are low. Isolated avalanche prone locations for backcountry skiers and freeriders are to be found in the form of recently formed snowdrift accumulations primarily above approximately 2200 m on west to north to northeast facing steep wind loaded slopes and increasingly frequently in areas adjacent to ridge lines. These drifted masses are usually small in breadth and depth and are most prone to triggering at an altitude of about 2200 m, where in isolated cases they can be unleashed by minimum additional loading. The new snow makes it somewhat more difficult to recognize these danger spots, compared with recent days. In high alpine regions (above 3000 m) on northwest to north to northeast facing rocky slopes in transitions from little to lots of snow, isolated slab avalanches can be triggered by large additional loading. Full depth snowslides on steep, grassy hillsides continue to be possible, but are expected only in isolated cases.

SNOW LAYERING

Shortly after midnight, it began to snow throughout Tyrol. The largest amount of new snow was along the Main Alpine Ridge, with up to 10 cm. Elsewhere there was only a small amount. The snowpack is stably layered, all in all. Yesterday's strong southerly winds, particularly in those areas subject to foehn influence, have now slackened off noticeably, but the wind has left its traces on the snow surface: namely, wind crusts which have already become hard, at least at higher altitudes. Up to approximately 2200 m, there are melt freeze crusts of varying hardnesses embedded near the surface of the snowpack. On shady slopes in wind protected spots up to about 2200 m, there is also surface hoar in places, which is now blanketed over by new snow. Melt freeze crusts and surface hoar can serve as bed surfaces for small sized snowdrift accumulations. In high alpine regions, a layer of depth hoar is embedded at the lowermost level of the snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather situation: a small low pressure zone will sweep towards the southeast over the course of the day, in its wake cold air masses will be delivered to Tyrol from the north in increments over the coming days. Next week there may be noteworthy amounts of snowfall, perhaps even a few icy days. Mountain weather today: to begin with, lots of snowfall and fog, bringing poor visibility. However, the air is becoming drier from the west, the fog will lift between the Arlberg and the Ortler, withdraw to the mountain flanks and disperse this afternoon. From the mountains at the Brenner to the Hohe Tauern as well as along the northern Limestone Alps, it will stay overcast somewhat longer. The northerly winds will quickly disperse the clouds on the southern flank of the Alps. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 6 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 11 degrees. Light to moderate northerly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Continuing good touring conditions widespread.

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