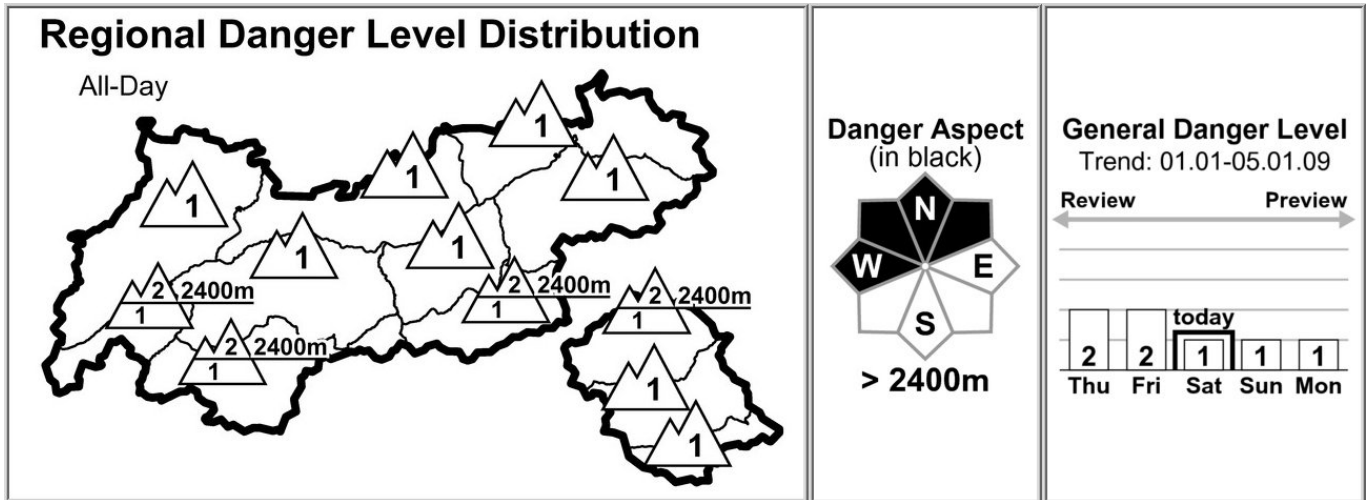


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 03.01.2009, at 07:30



FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS WIDESPREAD

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger in Tyrol is generally low in most regions. The hazards are moderate in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge above approximately 2400 m, where small sized, recently formed snowdrift accumulations are more frequent than elsewhere in Tyrol. These drifts are predominantly in areas adjacent to ridge lines and below rocky edges, increasingly frequently on west to north to northeast facing slopes. Backcountry skiers and freeriders with experience in assessing avalanche dangers can easily avoid these danger spots. Assessing the hazards in the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps is currently more difficult, since it snowed there yesterday, thus blanketing over the drifted masses. In high alpine regions (above 3000 m) in rocky transition areas from little to lots of snow on northwest to north to northeast facing slopes, isolated slab avalanches can be triggered by large additional loading. Full depth snowslides are currently rare.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is stably layered in general. Interconnected bed surfaces for slab avalanches can currently be found in melt-freeze crust layers near the surface, which are to be found in western regions in all aspects up to about 2200 m, in eastern regions up to about 1800 m, and in southern East Tyrol up to about 1600 m, also widespread at higher altitudes on very steep south facing slopes. In shady zones up to just above the treeline, surface hoar has formed which in some cases is covered over by snowdrift. Further, in high alpine regions a layer of depth hoar from early winter is embedded in the snowpack; however, the bonding of old snow and depth hoar is by now quite good, resulting in the overlying layers being both thick and stable. The snowpack is now becoming intensely faceted. This means that hard crusts and the increasingly frequent wind crusts at higher altitudes are gradually becoming thinner.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather today: a northwest current is supplying Tyrol with wintery temperatures and dry air masses at high altitudes. On Monday, a weak cold front will bring a small amount of new snow, thereafter conditions will continue without precipitation. Mountain weather today: in high alpine regions and in South Tyrol, predominantly brilliant sunshine. In most of North and East Tyrol's valleys, there will be high fog between about 1500 and just under 2000 m which will disperse in the course of the day, although some fog will cling to the mountain flanks at intermediate altitudes all day long. Light to moderate northeasterly winds. Temperature at 2000 m: between minus 10 and minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 13 to minus 10 degrees.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing favourable conditions. The hazards of falling outweigh the avalanche danger.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe