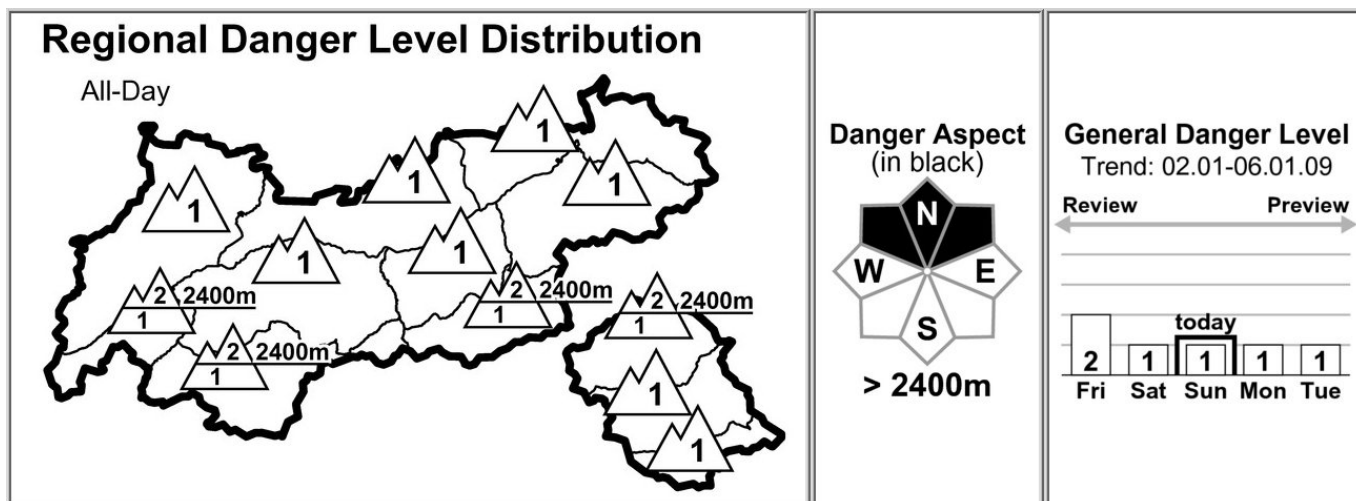


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 04.01.2009, at 07:30



CONTINUING FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR BACKCOUNTRY TOURING

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Silvretta over the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps, the Zillertal Alps and the East Tyrolean Tauren above approximately 2400 m is moderate. Elsewhere, low danger prevails in general. Backcountry skiers and freeriders should still exercise caution towards small sized, recently formed snowdrift accumulations, which are to be found primarily above approximately 2000 m, increasingly frequently in areas adjacent to ridge lines and below rocky edges on northwest to north to northeast facing slopes. The frequency of these danger spots increases with rising altitude. With some experience in assessing avalanche danger, they can be easily recognized and avoided. In high alpine regions (above 3000 m) in rocky, north facing transition areas from little to lots of snow, isolated slab avalanches can be triggered by large additional loading. As yesterday's avalanche in the Winkeltal demonstrated, isolated full depth snowslides which are unleashed on steep, grassy slopes can be ongoingly expected.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is stably layered far and wide. The tensions in the snowpack caused by faceted snow, which makes the snow looser, are diminishing steadily. Potential bed surfaces for slab avalanches are primarily in the wind crusts and melt-freeze crusts at the surface of the snowpack above approximately 2000 m. In shady zones near the treeline, there are isolated instances of surface hoar blanketed by deep snowdrift masses. A depth hoar fundament in the lowermost snowpack can now only be found in high alpine regions; this is generally well bonded with the old snowpack, making the snowpack covering it both thick and stable. The quality of the snow has suffered from wind influences over the last week: above the treeline there is a breakable crust widespread. Only in wind protected, primarily shady areas is there still powder snow.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather today: on Sunday high pressure influences are prevalent. From the northwest, the air at high altitudes will become increasingly moist. Next week will begin with overcast conditions, but remain mostly dry. As of the middle of the week, the next high pressure zone will take over, temperatures will increase incrementally, especially in the mountains. Mountain weather today: a splendid day, if cold, awaits those in the mountains. Lots of sunshine in the afternoon, clouds above the summits will initially be secondary. Between the Zugspitze and the Kitzbühel Alps, clouds could become more dense. Towards evening, cloudbanks will move in. Light to moderate northwesterly to westerly winds will prevail. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 9 to minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 14 degrees.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Favourable conditions continue unchanged.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe