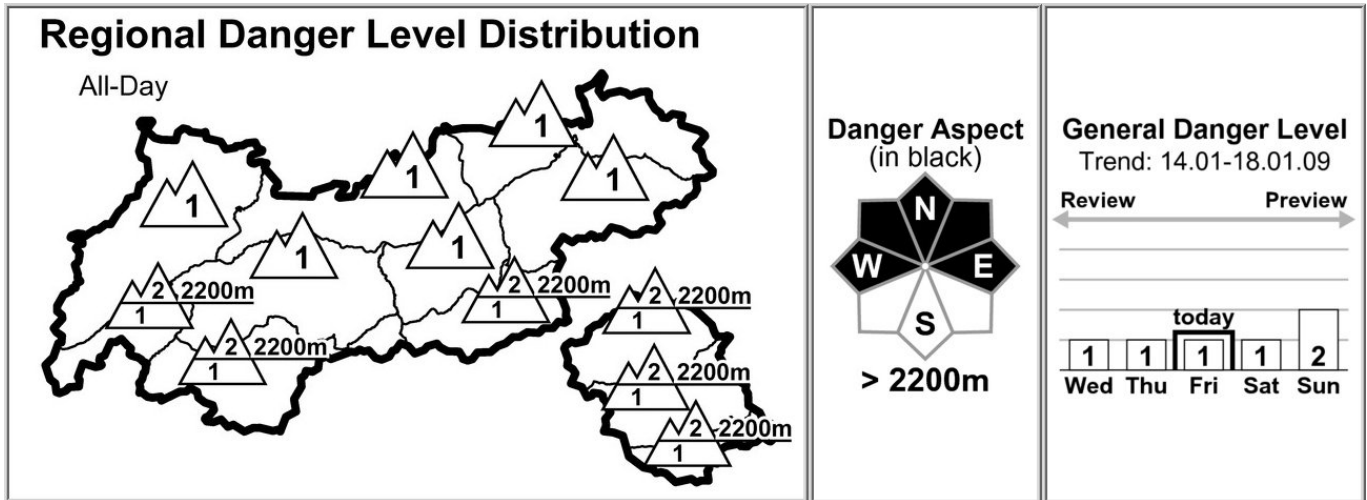


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 16.01.2009, at 07:30



BEWARE SMALL SNOWDRIFT MASSES IN SOUTHERN REGIONS IN PARTICULAR

AVALANCHE DANGER

Along the Main Alpine Ridge and in East Tyrol, there is moderate danger above approximately 2200 m. Below that altitude, the danger is low. Avalanche hazards in the other regions of North Tyrol also continue to be low. Currently, caution must be urged towards those areas where winds have formed new snowdrift accumulations; yesterday this was the case along the Main Alpine Ridge in particular. Such danger spots are to be found increasingly frequently in areas adjacent to ridge lines, where even minimum additional loading is usually sufficient to trigger avalanches in steep terrain. The snowdrift accumulations are still small in depth and breadth; moreover they are easy to recognize. They should under all circumstances be avoided whenever possible. Full depth snowslides on steep, grassy hillsides can also not be ruled out, although they are currently observed only seldom.

SNOW LAYERING

The new snow which fell yesterday along the Main Alpine Ridge and in East Tyrol has been transported by foehn winds, especially in regions subject to them, and deposited in steep, east to north to west facing wind protected areas adjacent to ridge lines in particular. The bonding of the snowdrift to the old snowpack is generally poor, making it extremely trigger sensitive. Apart from the snowdrift, the snowpack is virtually without internal tensions, consisting of loosely packed, faceted snow crystals. Up to about 2000 m, there is a thin melt freeze crust near the surface. With increasing altitude, wind crusts become more frequent, which are capable of bearing loads in areas exposed to winds.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather today: a high pressure zone extending from the western Mediterranean over the Alps all the way to the Baltic Sea will dominate today's weather. This stable front will not endure for long; on Saturday night, the first weak disturbances will arrive. Subsequently, an unstable weather situation will set in. Today is another outstanding day for winter sports, complete with blue skies, unimpeded sunshine, little wind and moderate temperatures at higher altitudes. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 4 to minus 1 degree; at 3000 m: minus 7 to minus 5 degrees. Light northwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Still favourable touring conditions widespread, with low avalanche danger. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations should be avoided.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe