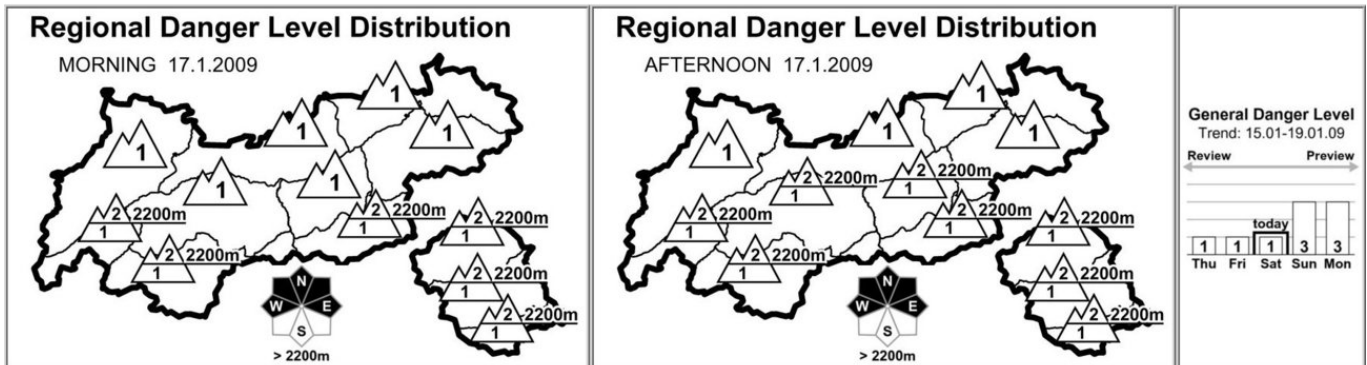


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 17.01.2009, at 07:30



ONGOING GENERALLY FAVOURABLE TOURING CONDITIONS - CAUTION TOWARDS FRESHLY SNOWDRIFTED SLOPES

AVALANCHE DANGER

Along the Main Alpine Ridge and in East Tyrol, avalanche danger above approximately 2200 m is moderate. Below 2200 m, the hazards are low. In the remaining regions of North Tyrol, the danger is also (still) low. Through upcoming winds in the course of the day, the danger in the northern Stubai, Ötztal and Tux Alps is expected to increase to moderate this afternoon above approximately 2200 m. Avalanche prone locations for backcountry skiers and freeriders are currently to be found primarily in those areas typically exposed to foehn winds, where on Thursday somewhat stronger winds formed new snowdrift accumulations, particularly in southern regions. They are to be found generally in shady areas adjacent to ridge lines. Reports of small sized avalanches corroborate this trigger sensitivity. Such danger spots are not widespread and easy to recognize. It is advised to avoid areas beneath glide cracks. Full depth snowslides can still be released on steep, grassy hillsides, even though they now seldom occur.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is low in tensions widespread and consists generally of faceted crystals. On shady slopes along narrow valleys, surface hoar is evident. Up to about 2000 m in all aspects, a combination of two thin melt-freeze crusts together with loosely packed, faceted crystals is evident near the surface. This combination is highly unfavourable for the approaching snowfall and any snow transport which may occur, for it is highly prone to triggering. Even at higher altitudes, freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are generally poorly bonded with the old snowpack. Beneath hard wind crusts capable of bearing loads, a somewhat more pronounced layer of depth hoar can be found, which in turn makes these spots trigger sensitive in isolated cases.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather today: the influence of the high pressure front over the Alps is weakening. To begin with, high altitude clouds will approach from the west. Then, as of Sunday, variable weather conditions will dominate. Mountain weather today: another day of fine mountain weather. The sunshine will at times be somewhat impeded by high altitude cloudbanks above the summits. Along the northern Limestone Alps, strong westerly winds are anticipated, towards the south the wind strength will abate. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 to minus 4 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 7 degrees. Moderate westerly winds will prevail, in the afternoon the westerlies will be strong and gusty at 60 to 70 km/h.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

As the wind gains in strength, the danger will swiftly escalate in southern regions in particular. In wind protected regions, favourable touring conditions are expected to continue.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe