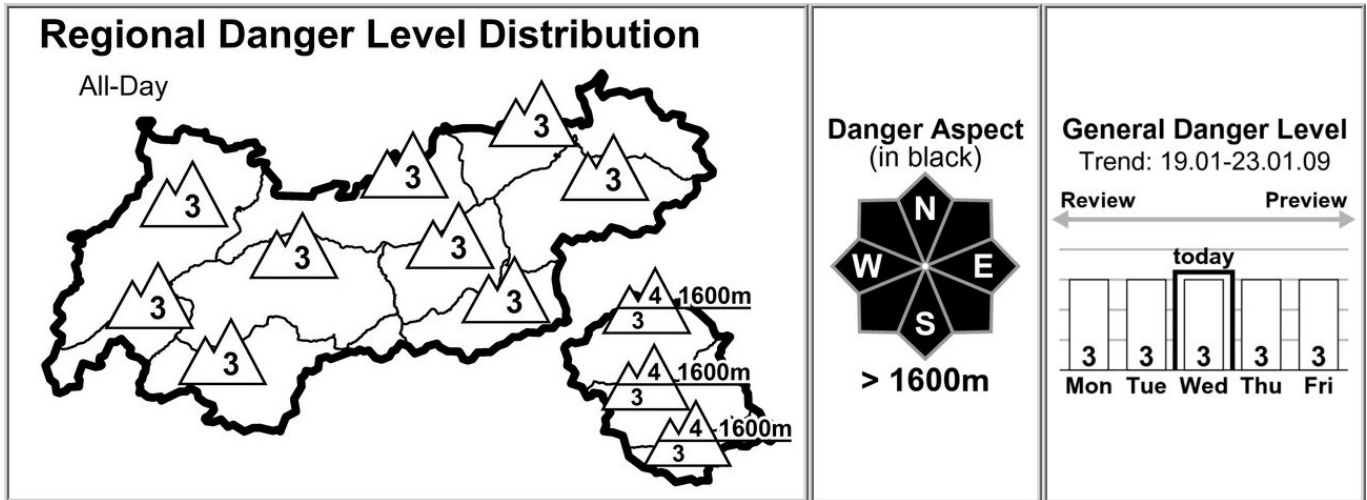


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 21.01.2009, at 07:30



CRITICAL AVALANCHE SITUATION, CONSIDERABLE DANGER WIDESPREAD

AVALANCHE DANGER

In Tyrol's touring regions, unfavourable conditions and considerable avalanche danger reign, in some places even high avalanche danger. The overall situation is critical. Avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes, in drifted gullies and bowls and in areas adjacent to ridge lines in all aspects above approximately 1600 m. Even a single backcountry skier or freerider is sufficient to trigger an avalanche. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in assessing avalanche hazards is imperative, great caution in route selection and upon entering steep slopes is urged. Isolated natural avalanches can also be expected today, which can place approach paths to huts particularly at risk.

SNOW LAYERING

Over the last 24 hours there has been 20 cm of new snow widespread in North Tyrol, in some places more than 30 cm. The major precipitation was in the Silvretta, the Arlberg/Ausserfern region and the Ötztal, Stubai and Zillertal main Alpine ridge. In East Tyrol there was more than 40 cm of snowfall from the Tauern Ridge to the Defereggental, further south there was more than 50 cm. The snowfall was accompanied by moderate southwesterly winds, in high alpine regions the winds were stormy, leading to snow transport and new snowdrift accumulations far and wide. Fresh and older snowdrift now cover over an old snowpack which is often loosely packed, with poor bonding of new and old snow. This danger is made greater by the fact that the snowdrift itself is, due to slackening winds, now being snowed over, making a recognition of the snowdrift accumulations difficult. The snowpack's proneness to triggering was confirmed by numerous natural avalanches yesterday, as well as successful artificially-triggered avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather today: a low pressure front is forming over Italy and continuing to supply moist air masses to the Alps. Tomorrow, Thursday, a weak intermediate high will dominate, before the next disturbance approaches. Mountain weather today: it will remain wintry, dense clouds, fog and light snowfall will provide poor visibility. The amounts of new snow will not be great, probably no more than 5 cm. Temperatures at 2000 m will drop from minus 5 to minus 8 degrees; at 3000 m from minus 9 to minus 12 degrees. Light to moderate winds from highly variable directions will prevail.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The avalanche hazards are not expected to subside soon.

Rudi Mair

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe