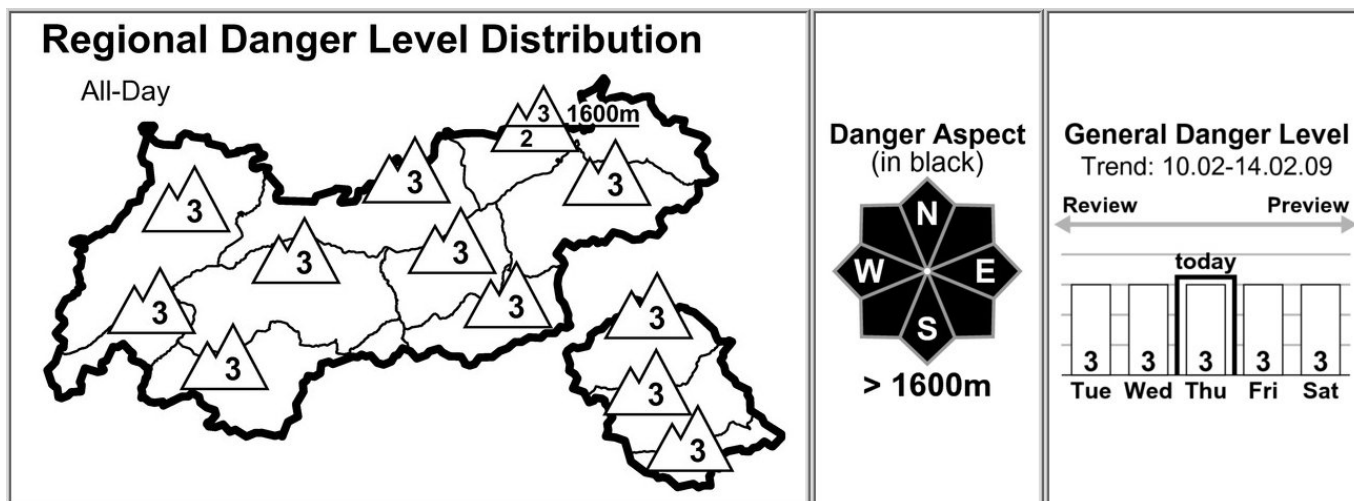


# Avalanche Bulletin

## of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Thursday, 12.02.2009, at 07:30



## TREACHEROUS AVALANCHE SITUATION FOR BACKCOUNTRY SKIERS AND FREERIDERS, GENERALLY CONSIDERABLE DANGER

### AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche hazards remain tense for backcountry skiers and freeriders. Throughout Tyrol, considerable danger of avalanches currently prevails. The combination of snowfall, wind and low temperatures have led to large sized new and brittle snowdrift accumulations forming far and wide. They are to be found primarily on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1600 m and can be easily triggered by minimum additional loading. Furthermore, the snowdrift accumulations which have been forming since the beginning of February due to the strong southerly winds are also a source of danger for backcountry skiers and freeriders. Thus, conditions now prevail which make both great experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards in open terrain and general caution in entering steep slopes imperative. Natural avalanches are no longer so likely, due to the slackening off of windspeeds during the day. The situation below about 1600 m and in the rare wind protected zones, as well as in the northeastern regions with relatively little snow, is more favourable.

### SNOW LAYERING

Over the last two days in northwestern regions, there has been about 40 cm of new snow, across the Northern Alps up to 75 cm. Generally strong westerly winds have brought about large snowdrift accumulations. The snowpack is thus highly irregular. Snowdrift masses can be found in all aspects and are poorly bonded with the old snowpack in general. There are two potential bed surfaces for avalanches. One is from the period of sunny and cold weather before 20 January: loosely packed, faceted snow crystals. The other stems from the snowfall since 6 February: to begin with, it was generally loosely packed above approximately 1600 m, in the meantime it has been covered over by snowdrift. On steep, sun-bathed slopes between 1600 and 2000 m in the areas of North Tyrol with relatively little snow, a thin, faceted layer has formed right between the new snow and the old snowpack which is weak.

### ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather conditions: in the wake of a low pressure zone above the Balkans, northwesterly arctic air masses are flowing towards the Alps. Mountain weather today: in the Northern Alps and Central Alps, lots of fog and intermittent snow flurries. South of the Main Alpine Ridge from the Dolomites to the Carnic Alps, both cloudy and sunny, with strong northerly winds. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 13 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 20 degrees. Moderate westerly to northerly winds.

### SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The avalanche situation will improve only slightly over the next few days.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe