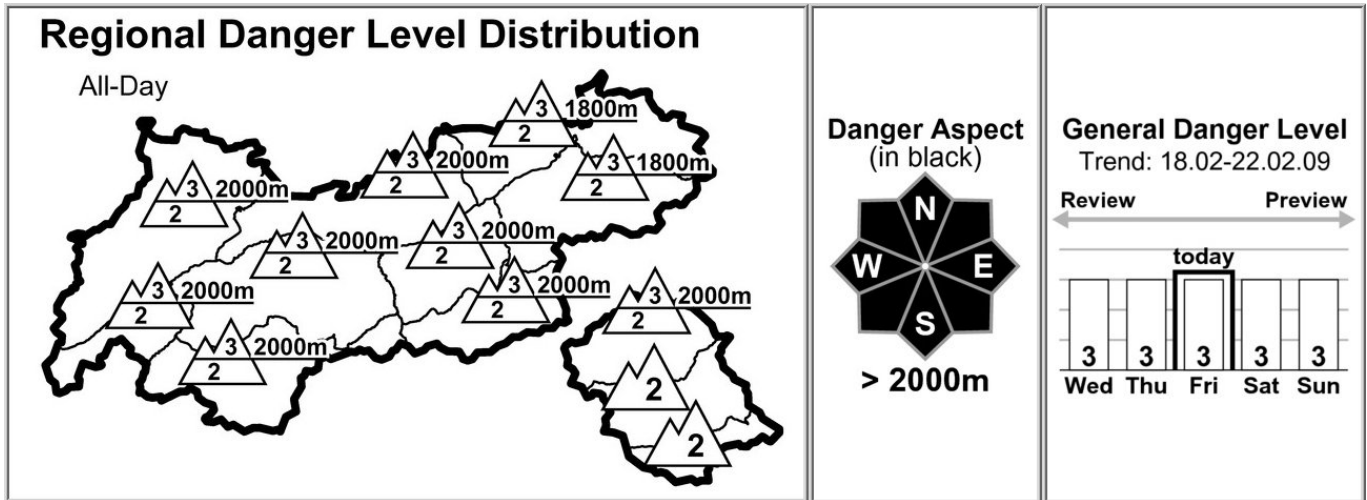


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 20.02.2009, at 07:30



IN HIGH ALPINE REGIONS, CONSIDERABLE AVALANCHE DANGER PERSISTS WIDESPREAD

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche situation is not quite as critical as it was two days ago; nevertheless, the danger in high alpine regions is still considerable far and wide. Avalanche prone locations continue to be found on steep slopes in all aspects, mainly above approximately 1800 to 2000 m. Especially the recently formed snowdrift accumulations can still be triggered even by minimum additional loading, including the weight of a single backcountry skier or freerider. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in assessing the avalanche hazards is essential. The situation on highly frequented routes and slopes is more favourable.

SNOW LAYERING

A sweeping and far ranging flight in a military helicopter yesterday confirmed the critical situation reported on Tuesday and Wednesday: countless naturally triggered avalanches were observed, most of medium size, some large sized. Since then, the new fallen snow and snowdrift of the recent period of precipitation have settled and consolidated under the influence of solar radiation and the daytime warming cycle. The bonding to the surface of the old snowpack has also improved. However, caution is still urged towards the trigger sensitive layers embedded inside the snowpack which can serve as bed surfaces for avalanches: on sunny slopes, loosely packed, faceted snow crystals covered by a thin melt freeze crust; on shady slopes, particularly at intermediate altitudes, unbonded layers are also evident deep in the snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather conditions: moist air masses bringing snow are being brought to the northern flank of the Alps by a northerly airstream, the southern flank of the Alps remains, leeward, protected from this syndrome. Further snowfall is expected on the northern flank of the Alps in the next few days, some of which will be intensive. Mountain weather today: along the northern flank of the Alps the clouds will become denser from the north and it will begin to snow in the Northern Alps. During the night, the snowfall will become heavier: by Saturday morning there will be 10 to 20 cm of new snow, towards the Kaiser and Steinberge Massifs more than 30 cm of snow is expected. Dry, sunny weather with high altitude clouds are expected in the Dolomites and Carnic Alps. Temperature at 2000 m: between minus 10 and minus 8 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 14 degrees. Northwesterly winds of 25 - 35 km/h, at higher altitudes in the Northern Alps the winds will be gusty and reach speeds of 70 - 80 km/h.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

New snow is again expected, the avalanche danger remains considerable far and wide.

Rudi Mair

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe