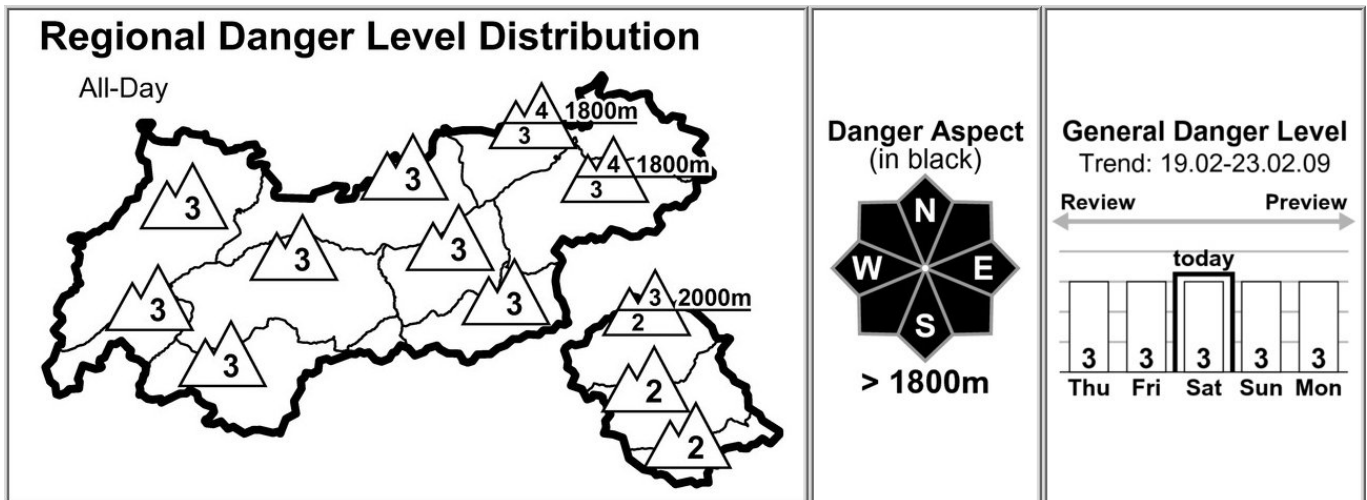


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 21.02.2009, at 07:30



AVALANCHE DANGER IS CONSIDERABLE WIDESPREAD

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger in Tyrol's backcountry touring regions remains considerable widespread. Avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. In general, even the weight of a single backcountry skier or freerider is sufficient to trigger a slab avalanche. Backcountry tours require experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards. Older snowdrift accumulations are difficult to recognize, since they are blanketed over by new snow and newer snowdrift. Avalanches are generally unleashed in the uppermost layers of the snowpack, but can also fracture down to the lower layers and thus attain large size.

SNOW LAYERING

Over the last 24 hours there has been 20 to 30 cm of new snow in the Silvretta, the Arlberg/Ausserfern region and along the Northern Alps; in North Tyrol's Lower Inn Valley, 30 to 40 cm. Further towards the Main Alpine Ridge there was 10 to 20 cm of snowfall, the southern flank of the Alps got no snow. High altitude northwesterly winds were generally strong enough to transport the snow, which led to new, small sized snowdrift accumulations forming in high alpine regions. Tuesday's new snow and snowdrift have now settled and consolidated quite adequately with the old snowpack, but embedded inside the old snowpack are often weak layers which can serve as bed surfaces for avalanches. These trigger sensitive layers are to be found both on sunny slopes, in the form of a loosely packed layer beneath the melt freeze crust, and on shady slopes in the form of thin layers of faceted, unbonded snow crystals.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather conditions: the northwesterly airstream will bring several increments of snowfall to the northern flank of the Alps between now and Tuesday, but there will be intermittent tranquil phases, too. Mountain weather today: by midday, particularly in the Northern Alps as far as the Kitzbühel Alps, both snowfall and dense fog can be expected. In the glacier regions of the Upper Inn Valley, better visibility is anticipated during the afternoon. In the southern parts of East and South Tyrol it will be sunnier, but windy in places. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 8 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 15 degrees. Moderate northwesterly winds, at higher altitudes the winds will be stronger.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Overall considerable avalanche danger continues.

Rudi Mair

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe