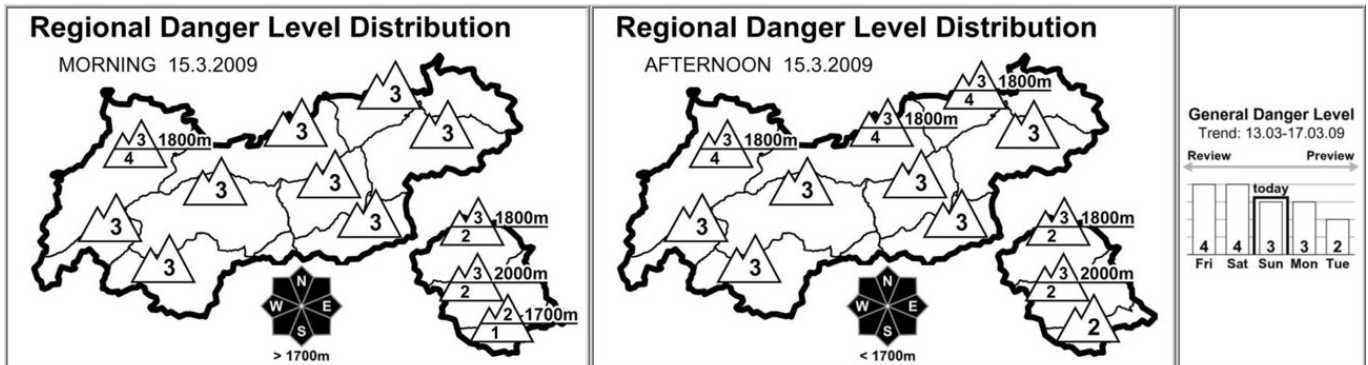


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 15.03.2009, at 07:30



HIGH DANGER IN NORTH BELOW 1800 M DUE TO RAIN - ELSEWHERE GENERALLY CONSIDERABLE DANGER

AVALANCHE DANGER

In Tyrol's northern regions, i.e. from the Arlberg over Ausserfern to the Northern Alps, the avalanche danger is high, due to the rain which is soon to begin below about 1800 m. Wet snow avalanches and moist sluffs are expected to be frequent on steep grassy slopes. The hazards will diminish somewhat during the day as temperatures drop. In remaining North Tyrol, considerable avalanche danger prevails widespread. Avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep west-northwest to north to east-northeast slopes above approximately 1700 m. Particularly in wind protected bowls, minimum additional loading can unleash even large sized avalanches, especially in the Tux, Zillertal, Ötztal and Stubai Alps. Elsewhere, caution is urged towards recently formed snowdrift accumulations in areas adjacent to ridge lines above approximately 2500 m, which can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. In southern East Tyrol, conditions are significantly better: the danger at low altitudes is low, moderate at higher altitudes, rising somewhat over the course of the day.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack was moistened yesterday in west to south to east facing sectors in particular. This effect was lessened at higher altitudes by the wind. The decisive factor today is the loss of snowpack firmness caused by the rainfall in northern regions of North Tyrol, which on shady slopes above 1700 m could "activate" the weak layer from mid-January as a bed surface for slab avalanches. On sun-bathed slopes, several melt-freeze crusts are embedded inside the snowpack, which help to stabilise it. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are in the meantime only in some high altitude regions poorly bonded with the old snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather conditions: a disturbance is supplying moist and cooler air masses to the Alps, but will move past by tomorrow. It will be followed by a high pressure front, but also only temporarily. In the latter part of next week, a low from the northeast will begin to dominate, pushing back the Atlantic high. Mountain weather today: fog and snow showers, especially in the Northern Alps. During the day, intermittent bright spells. On the Main Alpine Ridge, only light flurries and a few hours of attractive weather conditions. The southern flank of the Alps will have the most sunshine. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 9 degrees. Strong to moderate northwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

An improved situation, due to the arrival of dry air masses.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe