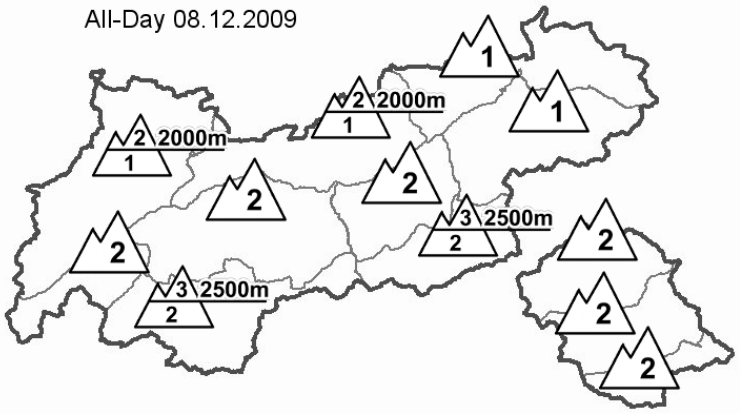
Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 08.12.2009, at 07:30

Regional Avalanche Danger Levels

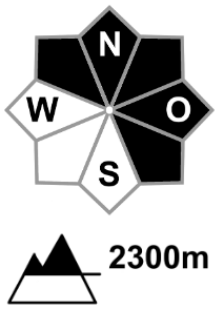
All-Day 08.12.2009



Danger Aspect

(in black)

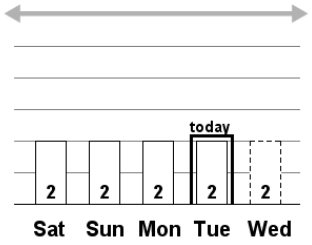
wind-loaded slopes



General Danger Level

05.12 - 09.12.09

Trend



Caution urged towards fresh snowdrift accumulations above approximately 2300 m

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AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is considerable in the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps and in the western Zillertal Alps above approximately 2500 m. This is due to snowdrift accumulations which formed a week ago on west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes. In places with little snow or in transition areas from little to lots of snow, slab avalanches can still be triggered in steep terrain through minimum additional loading, i.e. from one single ski tourer or freerider. The avalanche prone locations become more frequent with increasing altitude, as does the likelihood of triggering. In those regions of East Tyrol with lots of snow, isolated full depth snowslides are still possible on steep grassy slopes. Throughout Tyrol, caution is urged towards the snowdrift accumulations which will form above 2300 m due to the cold front which is sweeping through. These are generally in areas adjacent to ridge lines and can be easily recognized in good visibility by experienced ski tourers. The rule is: the proneness to triggering of this snowdrift becomes ever higher with increasing altitude.

SNOW LAYERING

Last night in many areas of North Tyrol's western regions there was heavy rainfall up to about 2000 m. The snowfall level dropped at the same time and is currently at 1200 m. Thus, the snowpack is moist or wet on the surface, due to the rain and higher temperatures of recent days, up to just under 2300 m. The bonding of the freshly fallen snow to the old snowpack is adequate up to that altitude. However, above approximately 2300 m, the bonding of freshly formed snowdrift becomes weaker and weaker with increasing altitude; the proneness to triggering becomes correspondingly higher. In the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge on west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes, there is a layer near to the ground which has become faceted. Up to approximately 3200 m, there is also a thin layer of rain still from mid-November. Snowdrift accumulations from last week lying atop these weak layers can be disturbed above approximately 2500 m.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: snowfall, which could become heavy over midday, accompanied by strong winds at high altitudes which is expected to transport the freshly fallen snow. A total of 15 to 25 cm of snowfall is anticipated. During the afternoon it will slacken off to barrier-effect snow flurries and fog with a tendency towards bright spells along the Main Alpine Ridge. In the Southern Alps more sunshine is expected this afternoon, amidst northerly winds. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 to minus 7 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 4 to minus 13 degrees and falling. Moderate to strong winds which will shift to northwesterly in the course of the day.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The major danger still stems from freshly formed snowdrift.

Patrick Nairz **Translated by Jeffrey McCabe**

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