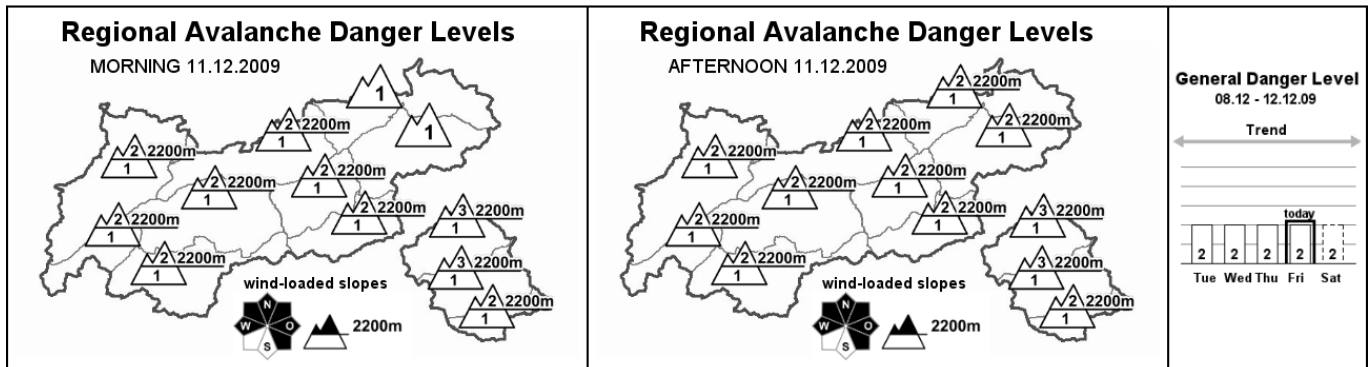


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 11.12.2009, at 07:30



Above 2200 m, avalanche danger escalates slightly amidst snowfall and winds

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is contingent on altitude: up to about 2200 m, low danger generally prevails, above that altitude it is predominantly moderate, although the situation throughout Tyrol is less and less favourable with increasing altitude. Over the last few days, first in East Tyrol, intermittently in North Tyrol as well, new snowdrift accumulations have formed which can be released even by minimum additional loading, particularly above approximately 2600 m. Especially hazardous are very steep areas adjacent to ridge lines as well as gullies and bowls. In the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge, i.e. from the Silvretta in the west to the East Tyrol Tauern in the east, slab avalanches can be triggered in very steep terrain above approximately 2500 m in a weak layer near the ground, especially in transition areas from little to lots of snow.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday's cloud movements as of the early morning hours, together with the rising temperatures accompanied by rainfall generally up to 2000 m in North Tyrol and northern East Tyrol were beneficial for the snowpack. The bonding of today's snowfall to the old snowpack will, at least below 2200 m, be aided thereby, although that bonding will weaken with increasing altitude. Below about 2200 m, the snowpack is currently stable. Depending on exposition, 1 to 2 melt freeze crusts are evident, which however are not potential bed surfaces for slab avalanches. Only at higher altitudes, particularly on west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes are there still faceted layers from early winter near the base of the snowpack which could serve as bed surfaces for avalanches. At greater altitudes, the new snowdrift accumulations are often poorly bonded with the uppermost cold layers of the old snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: in the Northern Limestone Alps, poor visibility and increasingly heavy snowfall. By Saturday morning about 20 to 25 cm of snowfall is expected. Towards the Main Alpine Ridge, the snowfall will be less (5 - 15 cm), but the peaks mostly hidden in clouds. The Dolomites and Carnic Alps will enjoy sunny weather conditions, brought about by the northerly winds. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 7 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 13 degrees. Brisk northwesterly winds; in the Northern Alps the winds will be strong.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The major danger still stems from fresh snowdrift accumulations which are more and more trigger sensitive with increasing altitude.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe