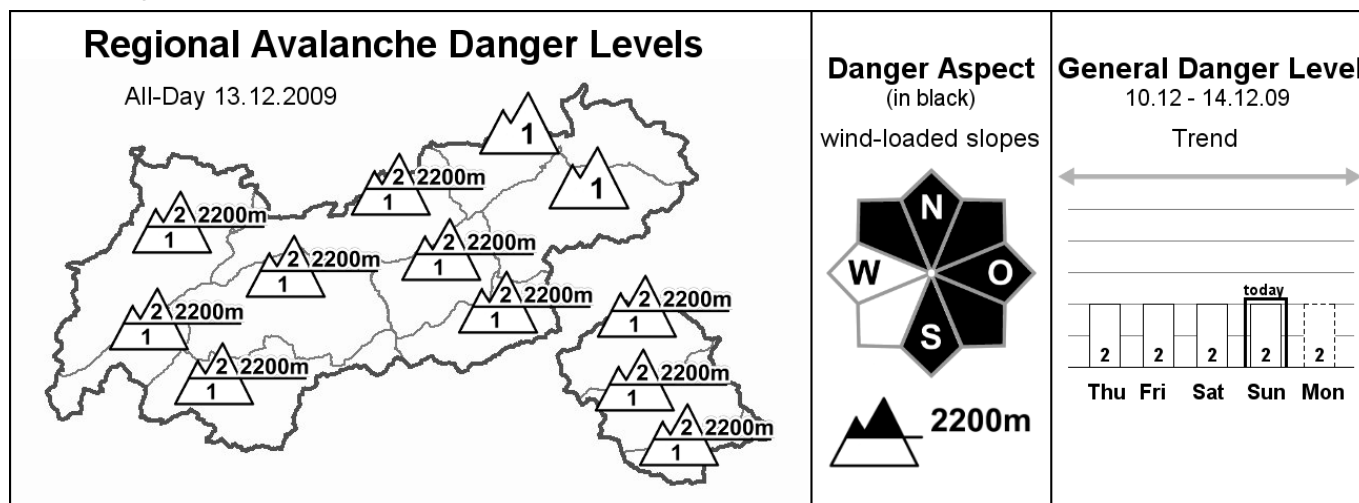


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 13.12.2009, at 07:30



Adjacent to ridge lines, loosely packed snow blankets snowdrift

AVALANCHE DANGER

The level of avalanche danger depends on the altitude: above approximately 2200 m the danger is moderate widespread, below that altitude it remains low. Least favourable is the situation in high alpine regions, where earlier in the week, particularly in steep areas adjacent to ridge lines, frequent and large sized snowdrift accumulations formed in places, which can in isolated cases be triggered even by minimum additional loading. With decreasing altitude, such avalanche prone locations become smaller and less frequent, both in ridge line vicinity and in gullies and bowls. Recognizing and assessing the peril is made more difficult by the fact that the snowdrift is blanketed over with loosely packed powder snow. On steep, west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes above approximately 2500 m, particular caution is required, where in transition areas from shallow to deep snowpack in particular, slab avalanches can still be triggered, primarily through large additional loading. Today in isolated cases on extremely steep, sun-bathed slopes, small loosely packed snow avalanches can be released. In East Tyrol, where there is much more snow, full depth snowslides on very steep grassy slopes are also possible.

SNOW LAYERING

Throughout Tyrol the snowpack surface is generally loosely packed. The snow layering below about 2200 m is currently stable, even though the layers manifest varying hardness. With increasing altitude, the recently formed snowdrift accumulations become more and more hazardous for ski tourers and freeriders. However, only small areas are endangered, particularly steep slopes adjacent to ridge lines. The bonding of snowdrift to the old snowpack becomes weaker with increasing altitude. On shady slopes above approximately 2500 m, there is a loosely packed layer near the ground consisting of faceted crystals which could serve as a bed surface for slab avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: the summits of the Northern Alps will generally be shrouded in clouds, although no snowfall is expected. Persistently low, wintery temperatures. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 11 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 17 degrees. Light to moderate northerly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Concealed snowdrift accumulations in areas adjacent to ridge lines remain the major hazard for ski tourers and freeriders.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe