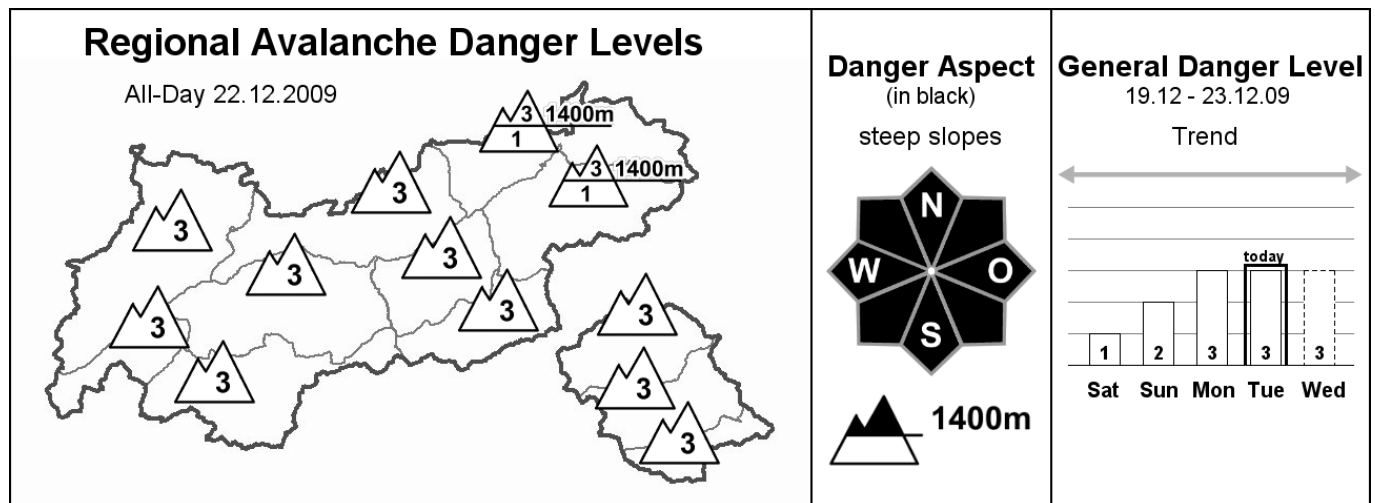


# Avalanche Bulletin

## of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 22.12.2009, at 07:30



### Ongoing treacherous avalanche situation for backcountry tours in all areas subject to wind

#### AVALANCHE DANGER

Generally considerable avalanche danger prevails; conditions for backcountry ski tourers and freeriders are thoroughly treacherous. The strong, occasionally stormy winds are continuing to create enormous snow transport. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can currently be easily triggered even by the weight of a single person. Even remote triggering of usually small sized, sometimes medium sized avalanches in flat or moderately steep terrain is quite possible. In steep, snowdrifted areas adjacent to ridge lines, slab avalanches can be naturally triggered, as was the case yesterday. The sharp rise in temperatures drastically increases the likelihood of natural avalanches being triggered. Wherever the winds in the last days have not been dominant, e.g. below the treeline, the situation is significantly more favourable. The problem is, due to the recent snow transport, backcountry ski tourers and freeriders are magnetically drawn to the large and deep snowdrifts, precisely where it is most dangerous. For that reason, detailed knowledge and experience in assessing avalanche dangers in outlying terrain away from secured ski slopes are imperative.

#### SNOW LAYERING

The long period of clear skies and very low temperatures has had its consequences. The old snowpack was thoroughly transformed, became quite loosely packed in general. On the surface, either loosely drifted snow or surface hoar was evident. The bonding of snowdrift to this cold, old snowpack is widespread very poor, the probability of triggering is correspondingly high. Melt-freeze crusts which are embedded in the snowpack up to approximately 2000 m and above on shady slopes in western regions of the Main Alpine Ridge do not currently have any influence on the avalanche hazards.

#### ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Strong foehn winds from southwesterly directions make mountain weather inhospitable today, particularly in those regions subject to foehn wind influence. Visibility in the Northern Alps is generally good and some sunshine is expected. The southern flank of the Alps will soon be buried in cloud and snowfall is presently anticipated. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 to plus 1 degree; at 3000 m: minus 5 to minus 3 degrees. Storm strength foehn winds from the south, with little tendency to slacken off.

#### SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The treacherous situation continues.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe