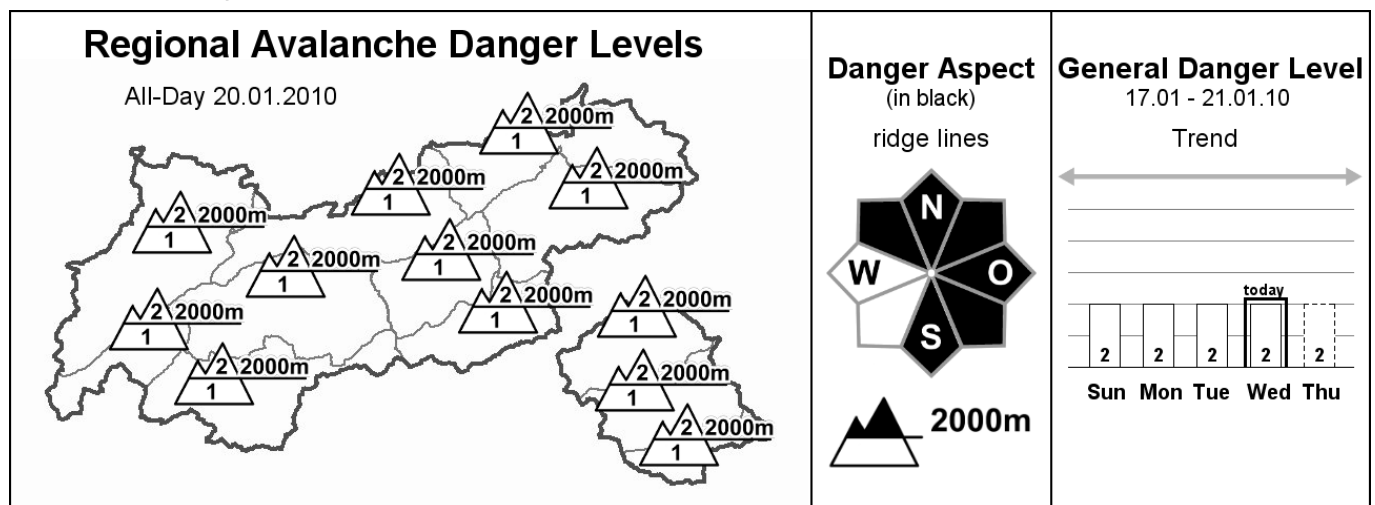


# Avalanche Bulletin

## of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 20.01.2010, at 07:30



### Frequent danger zones near ridge lines and in steep, snowdrifted terrain

#### AVALANCHE DANGER

Favourable conditions continue to dominate. The avalanche danger is still contingent on altitude: above approximately 2000 m, the danger level is moderate; below that altitude it is low widespread. Backcountry skiers and freeriders should exercise great caution assessing recently formed snowdrift accumulations, often found in steep areas adjacent to ridge lines and just behind breaks in the terrain. They become more and more frequent with ascending altitude and are most trigger sensitive in northwest to north to northeast facing terrain near ridge lines, since the bonding of the snowdrift to the old snowpack is poorest in those places. In isolated cases, minimum additional loading is sufficient to release avalanches, but experienced skiers should be able to recognize and avoid these places in steep, drifted terrain, despite the blanket of loosely packed, new fallen powder snow in places. In transition areas from shallow to deep snow, isolated avalanches can be triggered from inside the old snowpack, generally from large additional loading. Such avalanches become more likely with increasing altitude, but ordinarily only on very steep slopes.

#### SNOW LAYERING

At low and intermediate altitudes there is little or no snow at all, except in southern regions. Where snow is ample, the internal tension of the snowpack is low. Skiers often break through the loosely packed, faceted crystals all the way down to the ground. With increasing altitude, thin, hard, melt freeze crusts persist inside the snowpack all the way up to 2700 m. Snowdrift masses near the surface, particularly on shady slopes and adjacent to ridge lines, are often poorly bonded with the old snowpack. With increasing altitude, the distribution of snow becomes more and more irregular, due to wind influence. In addition, hard, wind-induced layers become more frequent; the thicker these layers are, the less likely avalanches are. Near the ground at high altitudes is a layer of depth hoar which could serve as a bed surface for slab avalanches.

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

Outstanding mountain weather conditions prevail: sunshine all day long, superb visibility. Wintery temperatures. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 8 to minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 15 to minus 12 degrees. Light to moderate westerly to southerly winds at high altitudes.

#### SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Generally quite favourable conditions.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe