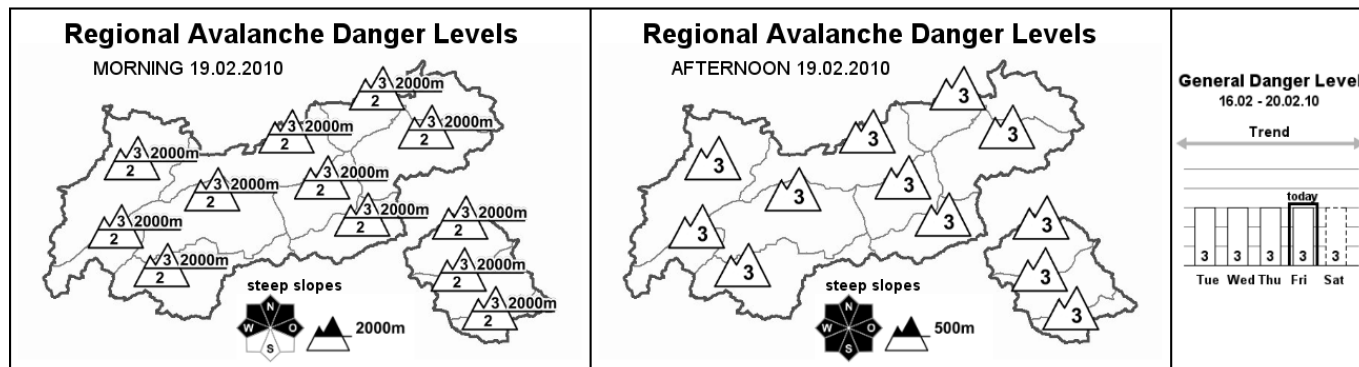


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 19.02.2010, at 07:30



Escalating avalanche danger today as the snowpack moistens

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is contingent on altitude to begin with, later on it is dependent on the time of day. During the morning, the danger is moderate widespread below about 2000 m, above that altitude it is considerable. As the melt freeze crust which formed during the night softens, the danger even at low and intermediate altitudes will increase to considerable. For backcountry skiers and freeriders, a variety of danger scenarios exist: at low and intermediate altitudes, increasingly frequent wet snow avalanches of generally small to medium size can be expected in all expositions in extremely steep terrain over the course of the day. At higher altitudes this is the case particularly for extremely steep, sun-bathed and wind-protected terrain. During the morning, slab avalanches, especially on very steep west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes above approximately 2000 m, can be triggered even by minimum additional loading. Over the course of the day, this will proceed to become more likely in other expositions as well. The peril is especially great in terrain which has not been used much this winter. In addition, the snowdrift accumulations brought about by the sometimes stormy winds at high altitudes yesterday necessitate great caution. These danger zones are mostly found in very steep west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing areas adjacent to ridge lines.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday the snowpack was intensely moistened at low and intermediate altitudes and on sun bathed slopes. During the predominantly clear night, the snowpack cooled off substantially. A melt freeze crust formed widespread near the surface. During the day today, the snowpack will again become moist, perhaps even wet, which will cause it to lose its firmness. The layer of depth hoar embedded in the old snowpack will then become a potential bed surface for slab avalanches during the morning, particularly above approximately 2000 m on west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes. This afternoon this may also be the case in other expositions.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

North of the Main Alpine Ridge, the foehn wind will scatter the clouds to begin with; on the Main Alpine Ridge itself and on the southern flank of the Alps from the Ortler over the Dolomites as far as the Carnic Alps, snowfall is expected during the morning hours. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 8 degrees. Stormy southwesterly winds, shifting to northwesterly this evening.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

At low and intermediate altitudes the avalanche danger will improve this evening, further to the south the improvement will occur somewhat earlier.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe