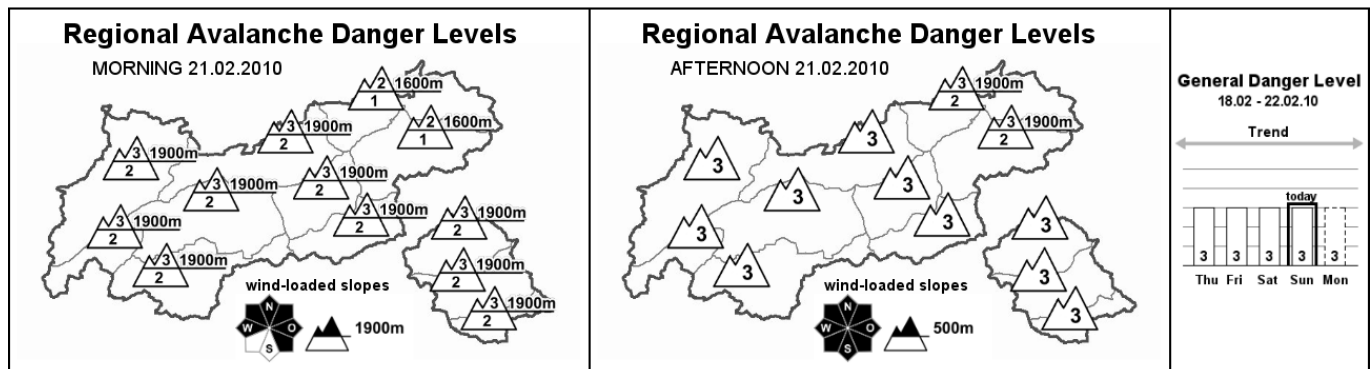


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 21.02.2010, at 07:30



Avalanche danger will escalate throughout day - Loose powder makes assessment difficult

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger at lower altitudes has subsided widespread; below about 1900 m it is generally moderate, at lower altitudes it is often low. Above that altitude it is still considerable. Caution is urged again today towards a number of perils. On the one hand, combined solar radiation and the daytime warming cycle will moisten the snowpack, make it lose its firmness, thus increasing the avalanche danger over the course of the day. On extremely steep, sun bathed slopes, frequent loose snow avalanches are expected today, which can, especially in the southern regions which have recently had lots of snow, unleash slab avalanches which would make them increase in magnitude. Backcountry skiers and freeriders can easily trigger slab avalanches as well. Further, the snowdrift accumulations above approximately 2400 m brought about by the short period of foehn winds, particularly in west to north to east facing terrain, require great caution. They are often deposited atop of surface hoar, making them especially easy to release. In addition, the snowdrift accumulations which have formed since the end of January are also a danger to backcountry skiers and freeriders; particularly in very steep west to north to east facing terrain above approximately 1900 m, they can be triggered by minimum additional loading, especially in places little used during the winter thus far. On south facing slopes, such snowdrift accumulations on very steep slopes can be triggered by large additional loading as of the afternoon hours. Assessing the hazards is made more difficult by the blanket of fresh fallen snow covering the danger spots. We recommend restraint when considering crossing steep, untouched terrain.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday over the course of the day in Tyrol's southern regions there was another 10 cm of snowfall, most of it with little wind influence. The temperatures dropped, which consolidated the moist surface layer. Both freshly formed and older snowdrift accumulations, particularly on west to north to east facing slopes, are still inadequately bonded with the layers beneath them. There is surface hoar above approximately 2400 m as one hindering factor; and there is a layer of depth hoar near the ground, as another.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Good weather conditions for winter sports, excellent visibility. This afternoon foehn winds will arise and the temperature increase. The freezing level will climb to 1300 m by this evening. On the southern flank of the Alps it will turn overcast by evening or in the early part of the night. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 10 to minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 19 to minus 13 degrees. Light to moderate northwesterly winds will shift to southwesterly and increase in velocity.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

New snowdrift accumulations will be formed through increasing winds.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe