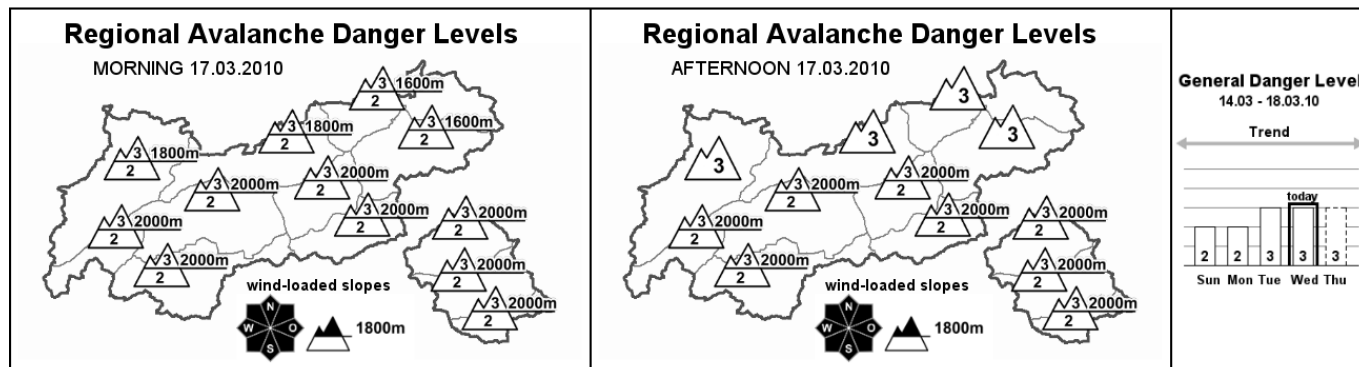


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 17.03.2010, at 07:30



Increasingly, fresh snowdrift accumulations can be naturally triggered this afternoon

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger during the morning hours depends on altitude and will increase over the course of the day. In northern regions, from the Arlberg to Ausserfern, the Northern Alps and the Kitzbühel Alps, considerable avalanche danger prevails above the treeline, moderate danger below it. In the remaining regions, 2000 m is generally the borderline between these two danger levels. As the forecast temperature rise takes effect, the danger will increase to considerable as of midday at all altitudes, particularly in those regions with lots of new fallen snow. Due to the very low humidity and strong winds in some places, probably only the fresh fallen snow will lose its firmness. Thus, primarily naturally triggered loosely packed snow avalanches and slab avalanches of the new fallen or newly transported snow are expected. Large sized natural avalanches which sweep along the old snowpack are unlikely today. Backcountry skiers and freeriders should avoid snowdrift accumulations in areas adjacent to ridge lines on steep, north to east to south facing slopes and in steep gullies and bowls. In addition, the old snowpack in unfrequented terrain can still be released by minimum additional loading, particularly on west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes above the treeline and in terrain above approximately 2400 m in all expositions. In high alpine regions, i.e. above 3000 m, avalanches sweeping along the old snowpack are mainly possible through large additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

Over the last 24 hours in Tyrol's northern regions there has generally been 20 to 30 cm of snowfall, locally as much as 40 cm. Strong winds have led to widespread snow transport and new snowdrift accumulations which have often been deposited atop a very thin melt freeze crust, under which a thin layer of faceted snow crystals lies. The bonding between the freshly formed snowdrift and the old snow is, thus, quite poor. As the snowpack becomes more moist, it will forfeit its firmness and become more prone to triggering. In addition, at least above the treeline, there are thick layers of depth hoar in many places, which can serve as a bed surface for slab avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Excellent mountain weather: lots of sunshine, the clouds are above summit altitudes and temperatures are expected to rise significantly over the course of the day. Freezing level this afternoon: 2000 m. Quite windy in some regions. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 7 to zero degrees; at 3000 m: minus 13 to minus 6 degrees. Moderate winds from generally westerly directions will prevail; near ridge lines and summits, the winds will be stronger.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The danger of wet snow avalanches will increase during the day.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe