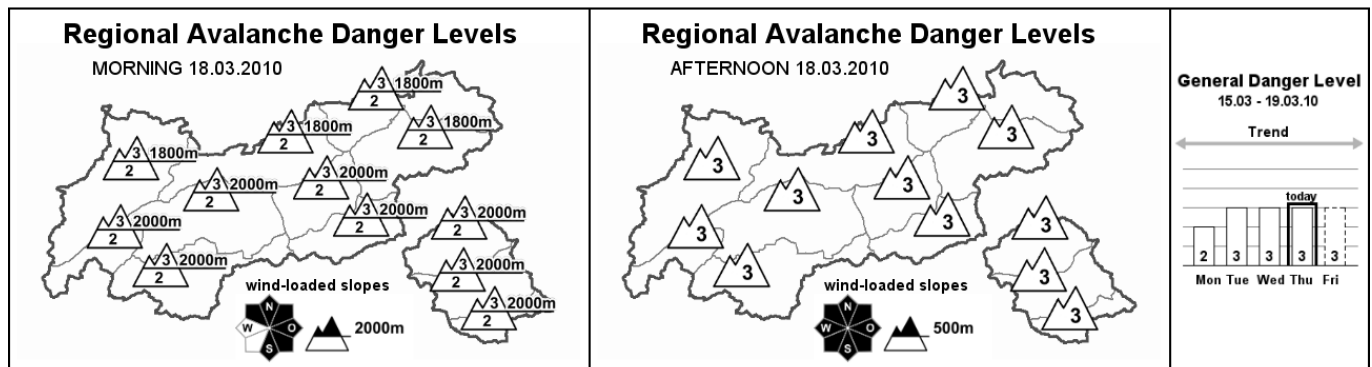


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Thursday, 18.03.2010, at 07:30



Increasing danger of wet snow avalanches

AVALANCHE DANGER

Characteristic of springtime, the avalanche danger is subject to a typical daytime warming cycle today. During the morning hours the peril depends on altitude. Below about 2000 m, the danger is moderate. Above that altitude it is considerable. The major hazard during the morning lies on unfrequented, steep, west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing slopes near the treeline and above it. The danger is also prominent in steep, east-northeast to south to west-northwest terrain above approximately 2400 m, where slab avalanches can still be triggered by minimum additional loading. In addition, in the northernmost regions of North Tyrol, where there has been the heaviest snowfall over the last 24 hours, freshly formed snowdrift accumulations in steep areas near ridge lines and steep gullies and bowls should under all circumstances be avoided. The decisive factor today is the increasingly moist snowpack, which increases the possibility of naturally triggered wet snow avalanches. Unlike yesterday, the natural slab avalanches today can sweep along not only the new fallen snow, but the old snowpack as well. This is even more hazardous as of late afternoon on very steep, south and southwest facing slopes below about 2300 m. In the northernmost regions, strong winds can impede the moistening process somewhat. On steep, grass covered slopes, more frequent full depth wet snowslides are possible.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday the snowpack became superficially moist on steep slopes which were exposed to the sun at low and intermediate altitudes. During the generally clear night, it consolidated again. Today the snowpack will again become moist in the course of the day, at low altitudes it will become thoroughly wet, thus losing its firmness. Recently formed snowdrift accumulations above approximately 2000 m are still inadequately bonded to the old snowpack. The layers of depth hoar prevalent above the treeline are still striking potential bed surfaces for slab avalanches. As the moistening of the snowpack proceeds apace, it becomes more and more likely that these layers will be triggered.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

The mountains themselves will be cloudless, but visibility will remain diffuse, due to the high altitude cloudbanks which will sweep by overhead. Moreover, it will be windy in some regions, but temperatures are rising. Freezing level nearing 2600 m and climbing. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 1 to plus 4 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 8 to minus 3 degrees. Moderate wind from generally westerly directions; in areas near ridge lines and summits in the Northern Alps, the wind will be strong in places.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Danger of wet snow avalanches continues to increase over the course of the day.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe