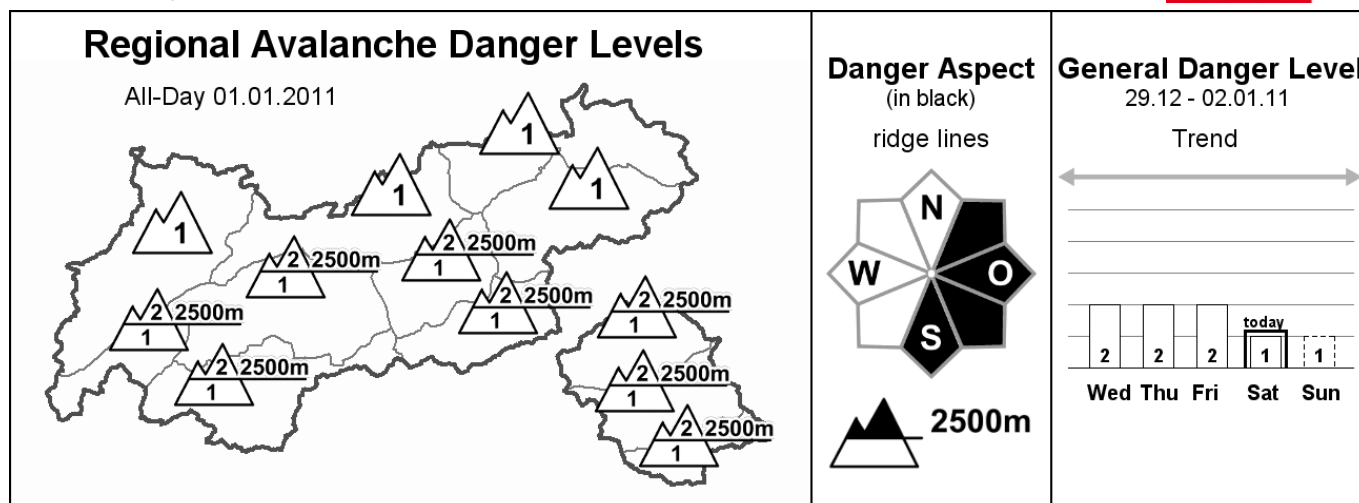


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 01.01.2011, at 07:30



Favourable backcountry touring conditions

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger has receded still further and can now be categorized as low in the regions of Arlberg-Ausserfern, Northern Alps and Kitzbühel Alps. In the remaining regions, moderate danger prevails above approximately 2500 m, low danger below that altitude. Caution is nonetheless urged towards freshly formed snowdrift accumulations, particularly in steep areas adjacent to ridge lines in northeastern to eastern to southern exposition. With experience, these danger zones can be easily recognized and circumvented. The avalanches which they release are generally small sized. Caution is also urged in very steep terrain, since a small avalanche can cause one to fall. The old snowpack can be triggered, in isolated cases, in very steep, north facing terrain around 2200 m altitude by large additional loading; this also applies to high alpine regions, i.e. above 3000 m, where areas of shallow snow in particular could trigger slab avalanches from a layer of depth hoar near the ground. At low and intermediate altitudes, isolated snowslides on steep, grassy slopes are possible.

SNOW LAYERING

The tensions inside the snowpack have decreased another notch. Potential bed surfaces for slab avalanches are to be found primarily at high altitudes in the form of a cold, loosely packed layer of fresh fallen snow which has been blanketed over by snowdrift, usually in steep areas adjacent to ridge lines. Additional potential, isolated, small sized, bed surfaces for avalanches can be found around 2200 m altitude in the form of thin, faceted layers encircled by thin ice crusts; or in high alpine regions in the form of a layer of depth hoar from early winter. On the uppermost surface of the snowpack at low and intermediate altitudes, surface hoar is increasingly forming. On shady slopes, there is frequently wonderful deep powder. On very steep south facing slopes there is now a thin melt freeze crust on the surface.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather: the dominant high is withdrawing towards the Atlantic, but will still rule the roost today. From the north, a low will reach us by tomorrow, accompanied by a weak cold front which will bring a bit of snowfall and temporarily lower temperatures to North Tyrol. Mountain weather today: above the fog, brilliant sunshine in the mountains, bringing splendid winter weather for sports from the Northern to the Southern Alps and excellent visibility. Light winds and not especially cold at high altitude. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 degrees, dropping to minus 5 degrees by this evening; at 3000 m: minus 6 degrees. Light northwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The wind can form new snowdrift accumulations in isolated cases.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe