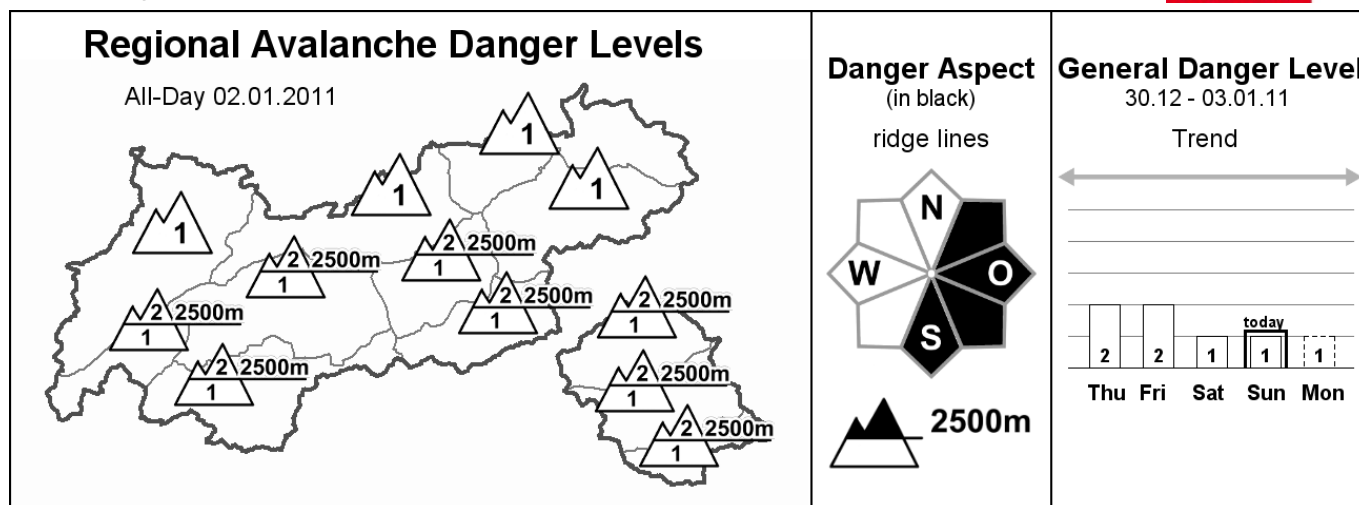


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 02.01.2011, at 07:30



Favourable backcountry touring conditions - beware fresh snowdrift near ridge lines

AVALANCHE DANGER

The favourable avalanche situation for backcountry skiers and freeriders is stable. In northern regions from Arlberg-Ausserfern over the Northern Alps to the Kitzbühel Alps, low danger generally prevails. In Tyrol's remaining regions, the danger above 2500 m is moderate, below that altitude it is low. Avalanche prone locations are to be found almost entirely in the form of fresh snowdrift accumulations above approximately 2000 m, due to current wind directions frequently in areas adjacent to ridge lines in northeastern to eastern to southern exposition as well as in very steep gullies and bowls. With ascending altitude, the frequency of such danger zones increases; however, they are usually small sized and easily recognized in general. A triggering of the old snowpack is becoming less and less likely. If at all possible, then in high alpine regions, i.e. above 3000 m, through large additional loading on shady, very steep slopes of transition areas from shallow to deep snow. Isolated full depth snowslides can be released on steep, grass covered slopes, especially at low and intermediate altitudes.

SNOW LAYERING

In northern regions, the snow depths are below average, in the furthestmost southern regions above average. The snowpack is losing its inner tensions more and more, which causes thin rain crusts inside the snowpack, widespread down to 2000 m, to dissolve. The snowpack currently does not tend towards extensive failure layers. Potential bed surfaces for slab avalanches are to be found in a loosely packed, cold layer near the uppermost surface atop of which snowdrift has been deposited. On shady, high alpine slopes there is a layer of depth hoar near the ground, from early winter. On the uppermost snowpack surface down to about 2000 m in fog-exposed regions, surface hoar has often formed. Elsewhere, in wind protected areas, there is perfect powder snow; in sunny areas and in general at lower altitudes, there is a thin melt freeze crust; in high alpine regions, there is frequently a wind crust.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather: a high over the British Isles and a low over Russia are bringing cold and, in its lowermost layers, moist air masses to the Alps. At the beginning of the week, cold air from the northwest will reach us, but it will be far drier. As of mid-week, temperatures will rise significantly. Mountain weather today: the Northern Alps are partly shrouded in cloud up to approximately 1500 - 2000 m, visibility is poor and light snowfall is expected. At higher altitudes the skies are often cloudless. Cloudless skies can also be found on the Main Alpine Ridge and in the Southern Alps. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 10 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 17 degrees. Moderate northwesterly winds, in high alpine regions the winds will be strong.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

No significant changes. Local winds may give rise to new snowdrift accumulations.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe