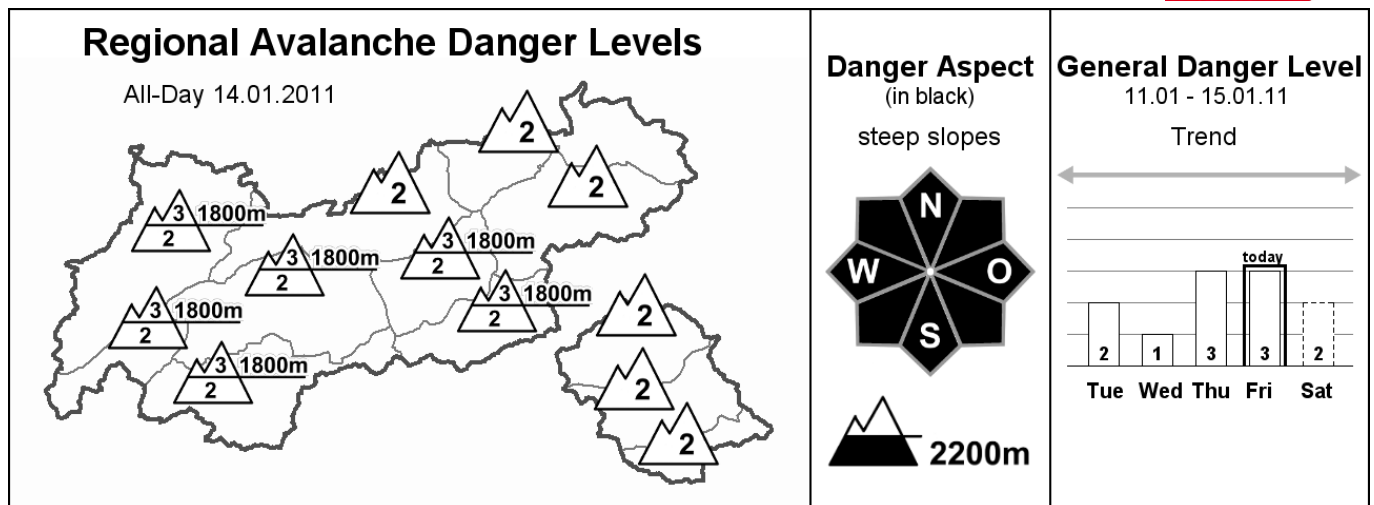


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 14.01.2011, at 07:30



Frequent wet snow avalanches on very steep slopes below 2400 m

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger level has receded somewhat since yesterday, but at least above approximately 1800 m in those areas of North Tyrol with the most snow, it remains considerable. Below that altitude, the danger level is moderate in general, due to the lesser amounts of snow. The major hazard stems from the wetness of the snow, which can be triggered even by minimum additional loading in very steep terrain, particularly below 2200 m. Loose snow avalanches in particular will be the upshot. In addition, increasingly frequent full depth snowslides are likely on steep, grass covered slopes. Threatening avalanches are indicated by fissures in the snowpack, so-called glide cracks. Above approximately 2400 m, caution is urged towards recently formed snowdrift masses on very steep northwest to north to east facing slopes, where in areas adjacent to ridge lines and behind crests and rims in the terrain, usually small-sized slab avalanches can be triggered. The conditions in southern East Tyrol are more favourable, although there, too, the snowpack is becoming increasingly wet at low and intermediate altitudes, making greater caution imperative.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday's heavy rainfall deteriorated the snowpack further; it is now thoroughly wet in general. It rained far and wide up to 2200 m in North Tyrol and in the East Tyrol Tauern, in some places as high as 2400 m. The loss in the snowpack's firmness was reflected in the many avalanches which were triggered. There are no bed surfaces inside the snowpack below about 2200 m, but the loose, wet snowpack can nonetheless be triggered even by slight impulses, particularly below about 1800 m. Above approximately 2400 m, a potential bed surface for slab avalanches lies near the surface: namely, the layer which was exposed to very low temperatures until last week, consisting mostly of loose, faceted crystals. Since the old snowpack was highly influenced by wind, this weak layer is a peril only across small surface areas.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather: a warm front is moving off to the east, in its wake a subtropical high is building up. This will be interrupted tomorrow by a fast moving, weak cold front in the north. The high will bring very mild air masses to Tyrol well into next week. Mountain weather today: strong winds will be blowing in exposed areas; they will sweep away the clouds, rapidly improving visibility. This will occur first on the Main Alpine Ridge, in the Northern Alps later on. Due to the emerging sunshine, it will turn mild at all altitudes. Caution is necessary towards the new fallen snow above approximately 2000 m which has fallen over the last 24 hours. Temperature at 2000 m: plus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 1 degree. Moderate northwesterly to westerly winds, winds will be stronger in the Northern Alps.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The major peril comes from the loss of snowpack firmness brought about by the warmth.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe