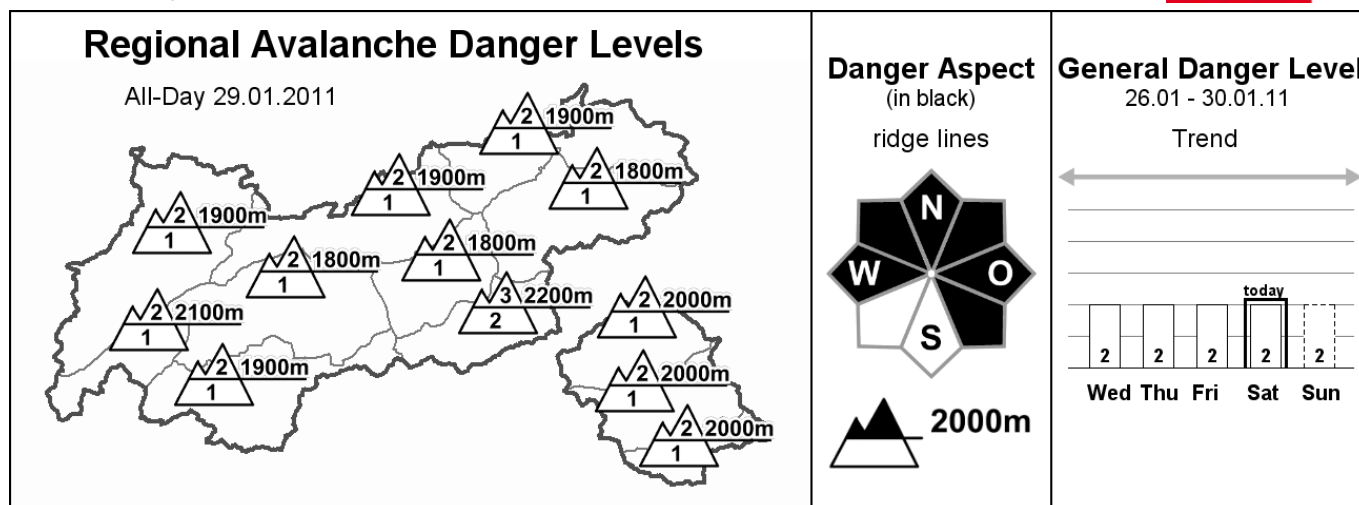


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 29.01.2011, at 07:30



Beware fresh snowdrift near ridge lines, especially in northern exposition

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is directly dependent on wind influence: this is most critical in foehn-exposed areas, particularly in the western parts of the Zillertal and Tux Alps, and in the eastern parts of the Stubai and Ötztal Alps, where new, trigger-sensitive snowdrift accumulations have formed above the treeline. They are usually in shady terrain near ridge lines, but also in gullies and bowls on west and east facing slopes. Even minimum additional loading is sufficient to trigger them as slab avalanches. In the remaining Tyrol, the winds were usually blowing only lightly, or locally somewhat stronger. Avalanche prone locations are limited there to very steep areas adjacent to ridge lines where there are freshly formed snowdrift accumulations. These danger zones are above the treeline and quite easily recognized. Their proneness to triggering tends to increase with ascending altitude. Further hazardous zones are found in extremely steep, shady terrain between about 2300 and 2800 m in isolated cases. Particularly in transition areas from shallow to deep snow, small slab avalanches can be triggered.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is in general well structured. The most threatening bed surface for slab avalanches is in the borderline zone between cold, loosely packed new fallen snow and fresh snowdrift. In places with shallow snow, frequently of northern exposition between about 2300 and 2800 m, there is a faceted, loosely packed layer embedded in the snowpack very near the ground in some places which could serve as a bed surface for small sized slab avalanches. The marvellous powder snow in wind protected zones is also deserving of mention. Most of it is to be found in the northern and eastern regions of North Tyrol.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: a low far to the south may well bring a few clouds to Tyrol over the course of the day. In the coming few days, a high over central Europe will provide calm winter weather conditions with lots of sunshine and intermittent high fog in some valleys. Mountain weather today: generally sunny, but not undisturbed. Later, cloudbanks will move in from the south, far above the summits, but sufficient to dampen the strength of the sun. The Northern Alps will be least affected by these clouds. In the Lower Inn Valley, local fogbanks this morning. In East Tyrol, the high fog will reach up to about 2000 m and may be hard to disperse. Temperature at 2000 m: between minus 9 and minus 3 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 12 to minus 9 degrees. Generally light to moderate high altitude winds coming from southeasterly directions, only on foehn mountains will the winds be strong.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

No significant change.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe