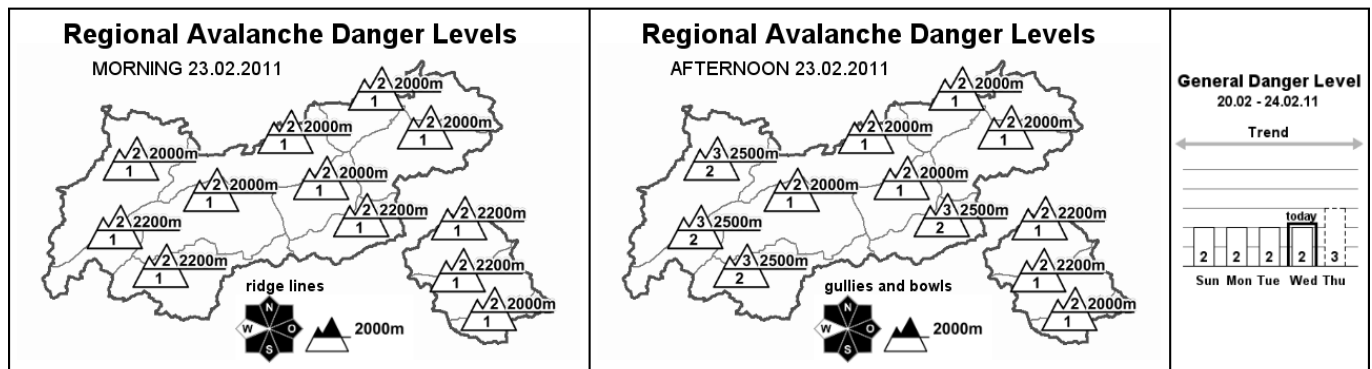


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 23.02.2011, at 07:30



Loose snow avalanches in steep terrain - Fresh snowdrift near ridgelines

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger remains dependent on altitude and could escalate significantly over the course of the day in regions with wind and snowfall above approximately 2500 m. During the morning above approximately 2000 m (along the Main Alpine Ridge above about 2200 m) the danger level is moderate, below that level it is low. Caution is generally urged towards fresh snowdrift accumulations, frequently in northeast to east to southwest facing areas adjacent to ridge lines, but also in gullies and bowls. Such danger zones become more frequent with ascending altitude and are expected to increase over the course of the day. With some experience in evaluating avalanche hazards, the snowdrift masses can be easily recognized. Furthermore, the snowdrift masses which formed a week ago, particularly in the East Tyrolean Dolomites and the southern Stubai and Ötztal Alps in steep areas near ridgelines of northern exposition, also require special caution; these masses are now blanketed over with new fallen snow. In extremely steep, sun-bathed terrain, loosely packed snow avalanches are certain today.

SNOW LAYERING

There has again been snowfall in Tyrol, most of it this time in the southern Stubai and Ötztal Alps (up to 25 cm). In remaining Tyrol there was 5 - 10 cm, in southern East Tyrol less than 5 cm. All in all over the last three days, it has snowed up to 40 cm in western, southern and northern regions of North Tyrol. In general, the snow has fallen loosely, although at higher altitudes the wind has now become stronger and begun to transport the fresh fallen snow. The bonding of snowdrift to the old snowpack is inadequate, particularly in northern exposition, somewhat better in other expositions. The foremost potential bed surface for slab avalanches is to be found in loosely packed, cold new fallen snow which has snowdrift deposited on top of it.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: the Alps lie within the influence of a dense northerly air current. Today, an intermediate high will make itself felt; tomorrow a disturbance will brush Tyrol. Over the course of the day on Friday, the high will regain dominance. Towards Sunday, more snowfall is anticipated. Mountain weather today: the fresh powder can be fully enjoyed in today's sunshine. Residual fog at intermediate altitudes will impede the morning hours on the northern flank of the Alps, but slowly disperse. It is very cold. Temperature at 2000 m: slightly rising from minus 14 to minus 10 degrees; at 3000 m: rising from minus 22 to minus 18 degrees. Light northerly winds, at high altitudes the winds will be brisker.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Snowfall and wind are building new danger zones in high alpine regions.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe