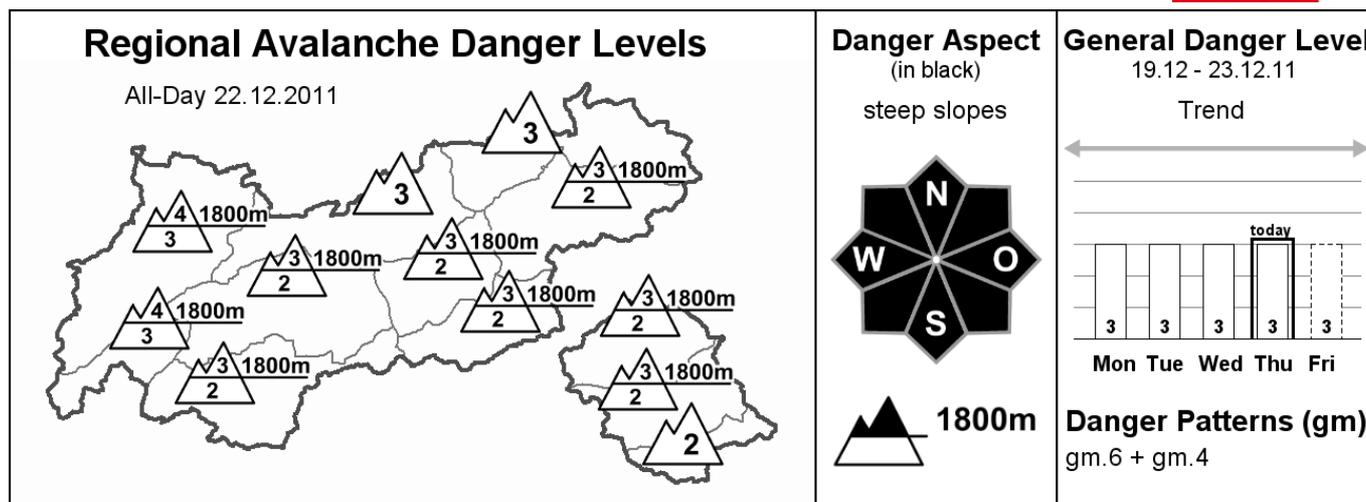


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Thursday, 22.12.2011, at 07:30



Critical avalanche situation continues, amidst high danger regionally

AVALANCHE DANGER

In Tirol's backcountry touring regions, predominantly unfavourable conditions prevail. In the regions of Arlberg, Ausserfern and Silvretta where there was heaviest snowfall, the danger is generally high. Naturally triggered avalanches can be expected here which in isolated cases can even place exposed transportation routes at risk. Away from secured ski runs, the highest degree of caution and restraint are called for. In the remaining regions, the danger level is usually considerable. Avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions, especially prevalent over approximately 1800 m. Avalanches can be triggered even by minimum additional loading, i.e. the weight of a single backcountry skier or freerider. Extensive experience is imperative in outlying terrain.

SNOW LAYERING

Over the last 24 hours there has been renewed heavy snowfall, particularly in the Arlberg/Ausserfern region, the Silvretta and along the Northern Alps, where in the last 2 days there has been a total of 50 to 80 cm of fresh fallen snow. Along the Main Alpine Ridge, in the Lower Inn Valley and in East Tirol's Tauern Ridge there was less snowfall. The least snowfall was in inneralpine regions and the southern regions of East Tirol. The northwesterly winds were usually strong enough to transport; thus, widespread and massive new snowdrift accumulations have formed. Inside the snowpack there are currently several trigger sensitive layers. In shady, high alpine regions the fundament is frequently unbonded depth hoar. Temperature variations inside the snowpack have led to the formation of a layer of faceted, loosely packed crystals at intermediate altitudes. In addition, the snowdrift is poorly bonded with the layer of new fallen snow directly beneath it, which further heightens proneness to triggering. Attention: fresh fallen snow and strong winds continue to create new snowdrift masses.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: Tirol lies in the path of a northerly air current which brings a warm front with heavy snowfall to the land today. Tomorrow, an intermediate high is expected, with rising temperatures at all altitudes. On Saturday, Christmas Eve, a cold front will reach Tirol from the northwest, bringing renewed snowfall. As of Sunday, a high pressure weather system will dominate. Mountain weather today: foggy, windy, with snowfall in the mountains, most of all in the Upper Inn Valley, with 30 to 50 cm of new fallen snow anticipated by Friday morning; elsewhere along the Main Alpine Ridge and in the Tauern, 20 to 40 cm; in the Southern Alps only 5 cm of fresh fallen snow. On Thursday night, conditions will improve, but temperatures will continue to rise. Temperature at 2000 m: rising from minus 6 to minus 2 degrees by this evening; at 3000 m: rising from minus 12 to minus 7 degrees by evening. Brisk to strong northwesterly winds, later shifting to northerly.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Drastic rise in temperature plus solar radiation will keep the avalanche situation tense.

Rudi Mair

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe