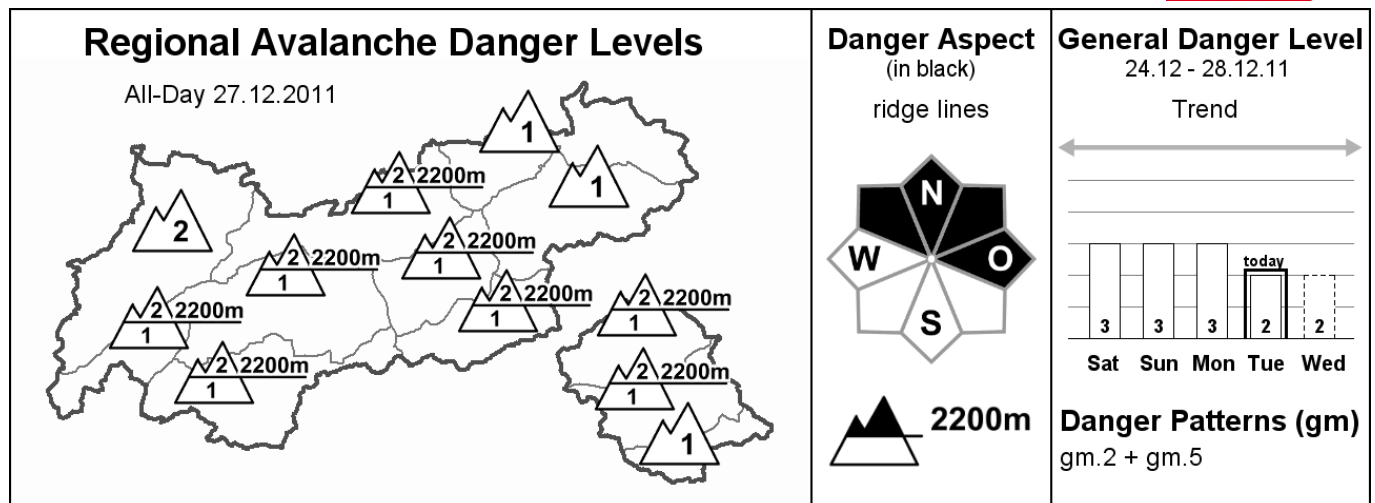


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 27.12.2011, at 07:30



Danger on very steep, shady slopes above 2500 m on Main Alpine Ridge

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger has generally subsided. In eastern regions and in southern East Tirol, low danger prevails for the most part. In the remaining regions, the danger level above approximately 2200 is moderate, below that altitude it is low (except for the Arlberg and Ausserfern). Three dangers must be heeded: the most hazardous is to be found on very steep, shady slopes above approximately 2500 m, particularly in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge, i.e. from Silvretta in the west to East Tirol's Tauern and central East Tirol in the east, where the snowpack can fracture all the way down to its lowermost levels, primarily through large additional loading. Avalanches there can attain medium size in isolated cases. Then, particularly in areas adjacent to ridgelines on steep slopes there is snowdrift which can be disturbed, especially on north facing slopes above about 2200 m. With some experience, these avalanche prone locations can be easily discerned. On steep, grassy slopes, in addition, particularly in western regions where snowfall was heaviest, snowslides are a danger. They usually 'announce' imminent release through glide cracks in the snowpack, making them easy to recognize and avoid.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is quite stably structured in general. Weak layers for potential slab avalanches are to be found above approximately 2500 m on shady slopes, especially in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge. At higher altitudes in particular, fresh snowdrift can be triggered at the borderline to the loose snowpack layers beneath it. Its trigger sensitivity rises with ascending altitude.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: an arc of high pressure extending from Brittany over Germany to the Black Sea currently dominates weather in the Alps. Inside this high, an inverted system has formed in which temperatures are milder at high altitudes than on the valley floor. On Thursday, a weather disturbance will move in from the west, temperatures will drop. Mountain weather today: magnificent conditions for backcountry skiing and freeriding tours under a cloudless sky with good visibility, due to the dry air masses above about 1500 m. It is remarkably mild at high altitude, with the freezing level at nearly 3000 m. Temperature at 2000 m: plus 2 to plus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 2 to zero degrees. Light to moderate northeasterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Favourable avalanche conditions continue, amidst poor snow quality

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe