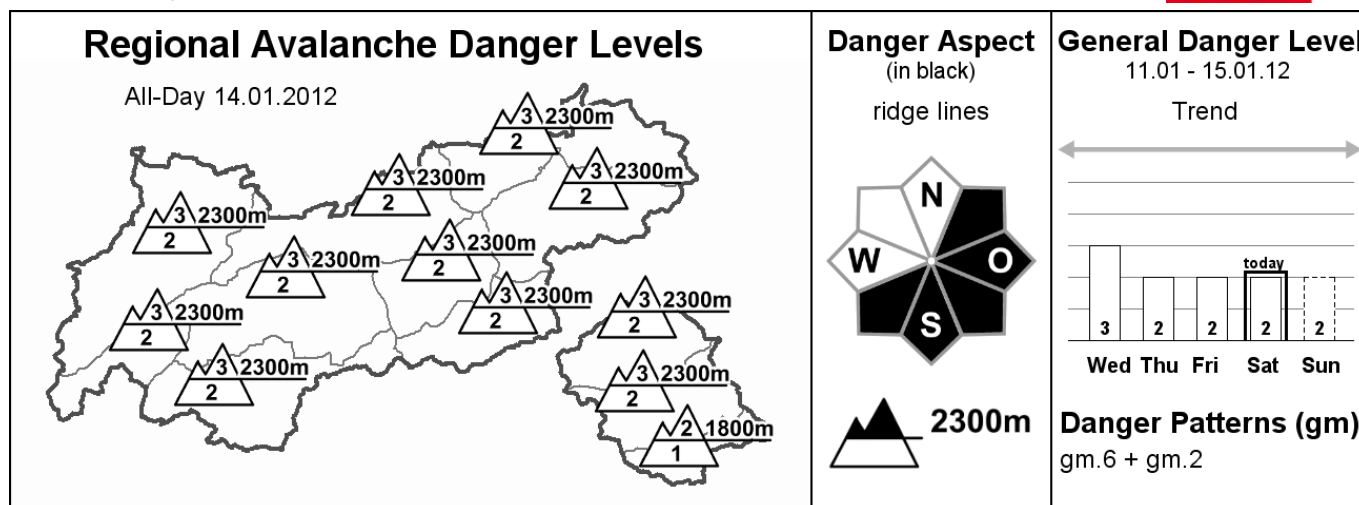


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 14.01.2012, at 07:30



The major dangers: fresh snowdrift, gliding snow and high alpine shady slopes

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger level is contingent on altitude. Above approximately 2300 m, the danger level is considerable, below that altitude it is moderate. There are three hazards which require special caution: to begin with, steep, grassy slopes over which the snowpack can glide. These so-called full depth snowslides are highly unpredictable and not dependent on additional loading. They announce imminent danger through glide cracks in the snowpack surface; thus, areas below such cracks should be avoided altogether. Then, since yesterday wide ranging snowdrift accumulations have newly formed, particularly in very steep terrain near ridgelines in northeastern to eastern to southwestern aspects above approximately 2300 m. These can be triggered even by minimum additional loading in places. With experience, the danger zones can be clearly recognized. Lastly, the shady, steep slopes in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge above approximately 2500 in particular can be triggered primarily by large additional loading. This is particularly true in transition areas from shallow to deep snow. On glaciers, it also applies to other aspects. Such avalanches can attain large size.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack has settled quite well and is stable widespread, with two exceptions: in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge there is a pronounced weak layer near the ground consisting of depth hoar. It is found above approximately 2500 m in northern aspects, and on glaciers it occurs in the other aspects as well. In addition, the fresh, cold and, thus, brittle snowdrift which has accumulated since Thursday evening has, particularly at high altitudes, not bonded well with the old snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: The powerful northerly air current is weakening, a high will gain in strength from the west today and dominate over the next few days. As of mid-week, unstable weather conditions are expected to return. Mountain weather today: terrific conditions for winter sports in western and southern regions, lots of sunshine and very good visibility. Only in high alpine regions will it be windy. Due to the icy temperatures, warm clothing is imperative. The mountains east of the Zugspitze-Brenner line and in the northern half of East Tyrol are still in clouds, intermittent snowfall is possible, but as of afternoon it will be increasingly sunny there as well. Temperatures correspond to this juncture of the season. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 11 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 18 degrees. The northwesterly wind will be strong to begin with, then slacken off somewhat during the day.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Avalanche danger is receding, freshly drifted snow is less likely to trigger.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe