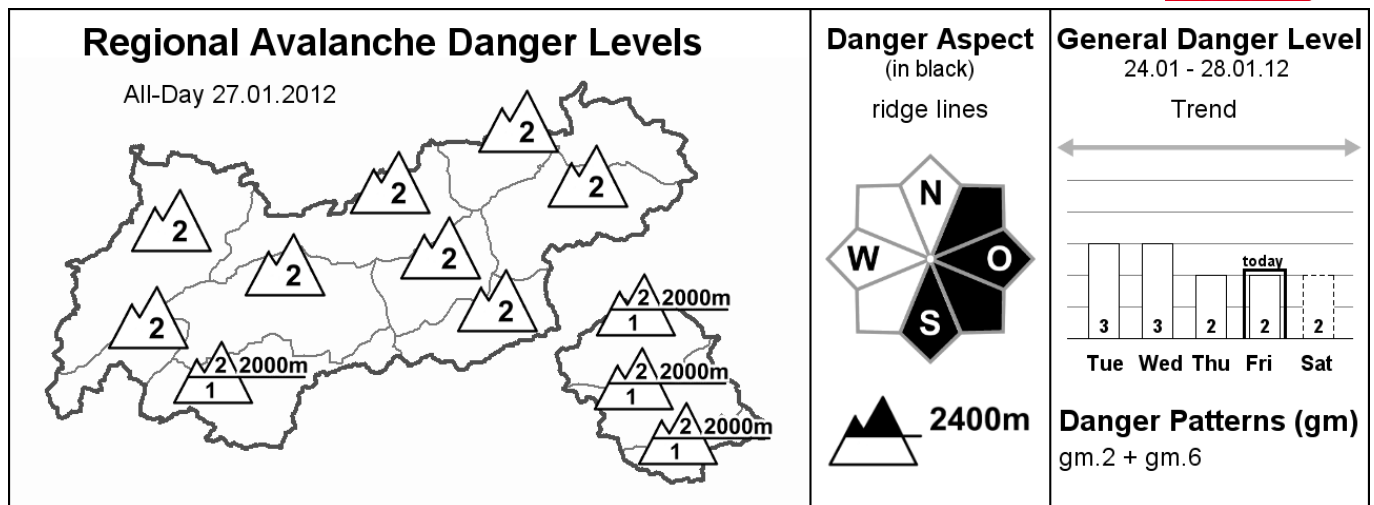


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 27.01.2012, at 07:30



Favourable conditions continue - Beware full depth snowslides and snowdrift accumulations

AVALANCHE DANGER

Increasingly favourable backcountry touring conditions prevail, the danger level for avalanches is generally moderate. In East Tirol and the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps, the danger below about 2000 m is low, since full depth snowslides have occurred only seldom there; above that altitude the danger level is moderate. Currently, the greatest caution is required towards full depth snowslides on steep, grassy slopes. They announce imminent release by glide cracks in the snowpack. For that reason, the area below such cracks should be avoided altogether. (There is also the additional danger that while skiing one can fall into one of the glide cracks.) A further danger, although only on small surface areas, comes from snowdrift accumulations. They occur frequently above approximately 2400 m in very steep ridgeline areas in northeastern to eastern to southern aspects. With some experience in evaluating avalanche dangers, this peril is easy to recognize. Only in isolated cases can the depth hoar fundament be triggered which is particularly prevalent along the Main Alpine Ridge above approximately 2500 m in transition areas from shallow to deep snow, especially in northern aspects. For its release, large additional loading is necessary.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is quite well structured in general. The most critical, by comparison, is a layer of depth hoar near the ground in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge above approximately 2500 m in northern aspects (on glaciers in all aspects). Due to the masses of snow on top of it and the impact of winds on the old snowpack, this layer is now unlikely to trigger. The transformatory process which has changed the snow over the last few days and developed rain crusts is not expected to be a problem below the treeline. The day before yesterday, high fog led to the formation of surface hoar in some regions.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: Tirol lies wedged between a powerful high over Russia and a low over the British Isles. From the west, a weak front system is making its way towards the Alps, but hardly any precipitation is anticipated. Mountain weather today: on the Arlberg and in the Lechtal Alps, the highest peaks are shrouded in clouds, but no more than scattered snow flurries are expected. Elsewhere the clouds are generally above the summits, visibility is diffuse. In the Southern Alps, more sunshine, particularly during the morning. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 4 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 8 degrees. Light to moderate northwesterly to westerly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Amidst very little new fallen snow, the avalanche situation is not expected to change significantly.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe