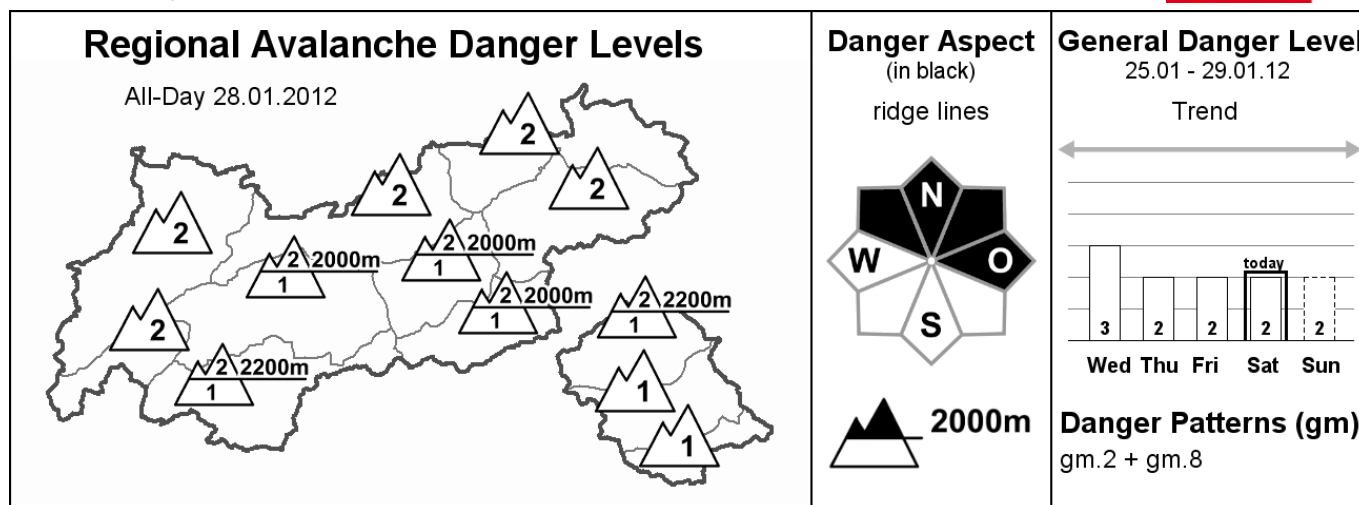


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 28.01.2012, at 07:30



Favourable touring conditions - Beware full depth snowslides

AVALANCHE DANGER

Favourable conditions for backcountry touring prevail, accompanied by moderate and even low danger of avalanches. In general, the peril lies in the regions with the deepest snow and where there are many steep, grassy slopes, i.e. Silvretta-Samnaun, Arlberg, Ausserfern, the Northern and Kitzbühel Alps, where the danger of full depth snowslides must be heeded. Full depth snowslides usually announce imminent release by glide cracks in the snowpack, making the hazard easily recognized. For that reason, areas below glide cracks should be avoided whenever possible. Further, in the areas particularly exposed to foehn wind and ridgeline areas, caution is urged towards freshly formed, small sized and shallow snowdrift masses, which currently are often deposited atop surface hoar and thus, easy to trigger. In isolated cases above about 2500 m, the snowpack in transition areas from shallow to deep snow on very steep, shady slopes in regions along the Main Alpine Ridge can be triggered by large additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

Numerous snow analyses over recent days have resulted in a uniform picture: the snowpack is generally well structured and stable. One potential bed surface for slab avalanches remains the fundament of depth hoar in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge which persists from autumn. It is found above approximately 2500 m, to begin with only on north facing slopes, at high altitude (above 3000 m) in all aspects. Thanks to the compressed and often deep snow on top of it, this weak layer is currently difficult to trigger. A small-surface problem is the surface hoar in foehn-exposed areas. Surface hoar is becoming increasingly evident in North Tirol, especially at high altitudes. In many places there is superb powder, on sunny slopes often a breakable crust.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: wedged between a powerful high over Russia and a distant low over the Atlantic, a low pressure gully is delivering moist air masses to Tirol. Mountain weather today: the Northern Alps in particular are veiled in cloud and fog, a few snow flurries are anticipated in western and northern regions. In the Southern Alps, visibility is better, the cloudbanks are higher. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 6 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 12 degrees. Light to moderate southerly winds. In foehn exposed areas, winds will be strong.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Favourable backcountry touring conditions continue

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe