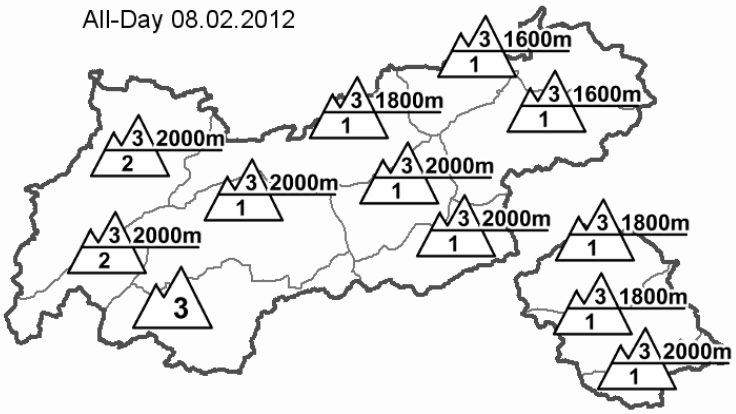
Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 08.02.2012, at 07:30

Regional Avalanche Danger Levels

All-Day 08.02.2012



Danger Aspect

(in black)

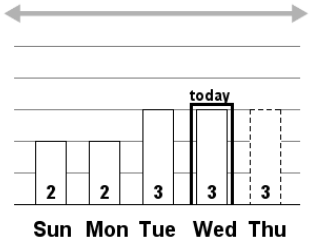
wind-loaded slopes

2000m

General Danger Level

05.02 - 09.02.12

Trend



Danger Patterns (gm)

gm.5 + gm.8 + gm.2

Caution urged towards fresh, often trigger sensitive snowdrift masses

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is contingent on altitude. Above the treeline, considerable danger generally prevails, below that altitude the danger level is often low and depends on wind influence. In the regions where snow is deepest, and where there are many steep, grassy slopes, the peril below the treeline is moderate, due to the increased hazards of full depth snowslides. The major danger currently stems from the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations, which are more prevalent than usual because of the ongoingly strong recent winds. Such snowdrift masses can now also be found below the treeline, particularly in the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps; but more frequently, they appear in steep ridgeline areas in southern to western to northern aspects, as well as in steep gullies and bowls in all aspects, above the treeline. Caution: even hard, wind compacted snowdrift can be triggered with ease in steep terrain. In addition, the likelihood of triggering tends to increase during the afternoon on very steep, sunny slopes. The advantage is: snowdrift masses can be recognized with ease, provided one has experience in evaluating avalanche dangers. Continued caution is urged towards full depth avalanches on steep, grassy slopes, they can be released despite the low temperatures.

SNOW LAYERING

In southern East Tirol, there has been an additional 10 cm of snowfall, in remaining Tirol there was none. The wind is the decisive factor in the present avalanche situation; the loose, cold snow is being increasingly transported. The bonding of fresh snowdrift with the old snowpack is thoroughly poor; the upper layer of the snowpack consists of surface hoar in some places, faceted, loose crystals in others. In places protected from recent winds, the snowpack is generally compact. Only in the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge on very steep, shady slopes above approximately 2500 m is there a fundament of depth hoar at ground level; this can be disturbed primarily where the snowpack is shallow through large additional loading.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: Tirol lies wedged between a high over northern Europe and a low over the Mediterranean, currently in the path of a mild and dry easterly air current. On Thursday, the next low will reach us from the northeast. Mountain weather today: above 1200 - 1500 m, sunshine will dominate, the clouds passing by will be above summit level. It will also be noticeably milder than in recent days, although quite windy to begin with. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 4 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 9 degrees. Brisk to strong southeasterly to easterly winds to start with, becoming weaker as the day goes on.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The primary hazard is still from fresh, but easily discerned, snowdrift accumulations

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