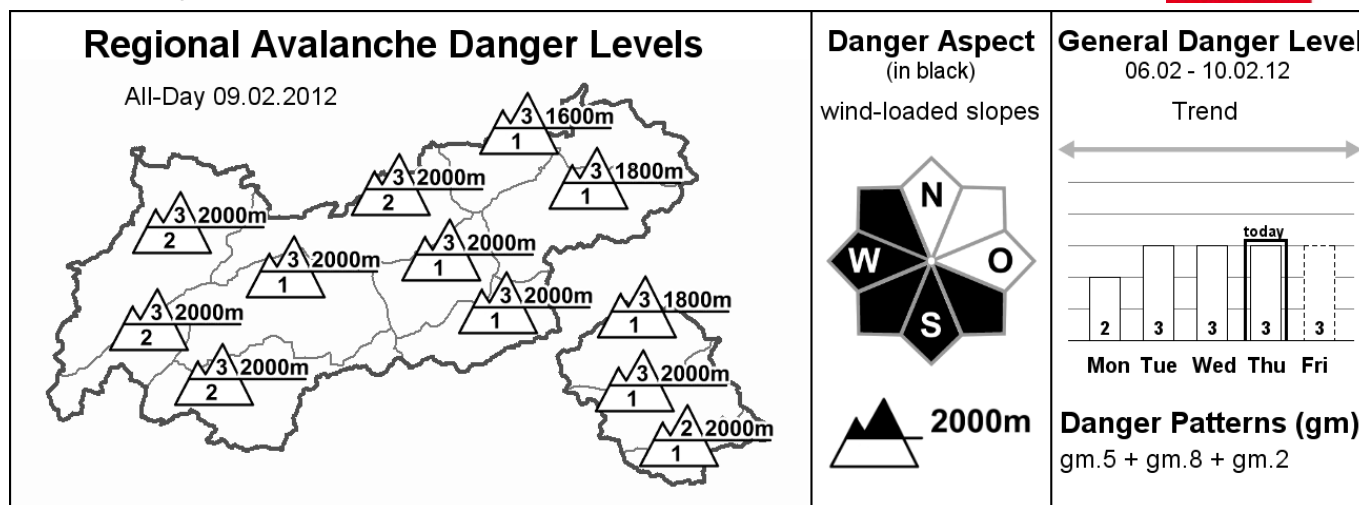


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Thursday, 09.02.2012, at 07:30



Main danger is still fresh, trigger sensitive snowdrift

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger varies in direct proportion to wind influence and altitude. Above the treeline, the danger level is generally considerable, below that altitude often low. The primary hazard stems from recently formed snowdrift accumulations. With the exception of the Ötztal, Stubai and East Tyrolean Tauern Alps, these masses are usually small sized and not very deep, but can be easily triggered by minimum additional loading. They are found often in ridgeline areas in southeastern to southern to northwestern aspects, as well as in gullies and bowls in all aspects. Wherever the wind has exercised no influence in recent days, conditions remain very favourable. Then, however, caution is urged particularly on steep, grassy slopes where the snowpack can slide all the way down to the ground - despite the low temperatures - since the deep snow tends to insulate the ground. Full depth snowslides are becoming more frequent in the western regions of North Tyrol; for that reason, the danger level below the treeline is moderate.

SNOW LAYERING

The wind has architected the avalanches in recent nights, particularly Tuesday night, when it did a thorough job of forming new snowdrift accumulations. Snowpack analysis, many shooting cracks and whumping sounds confirm the very poor bonding between the predominantly faceted snowpack surface and the snowdrift on top of it. In some places, the surface hoar has been blanketed over with new fallen snow or drifted over. Away from wind-influenced areas, there are still places where the wind has had little impact, where the snowpack is compact and usually covered with wonderful powder.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: a small low pressure system is moving from Poland to Austria and will traverse Tyrol on Thursday night. It will come to a halt in upper Italy, thus may leave some clouds in Tyrol, amidst a cold, easterly air current. Mountain weather today: temperatures will drop significantly today, and the wind will make it feel even colder. The day will begin with sunshine and merely high altitude cloudbanks, but this afternoon skies will turn overcast from the northeast and snow showers are anticipated, with deteriorating visibility. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 11 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 18 degrees. Moderate northerly winds; in high alpine regions, winds will be brisk to strong.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

No significant change in avalanche situation, but new snowdrift masses will accumulate

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe