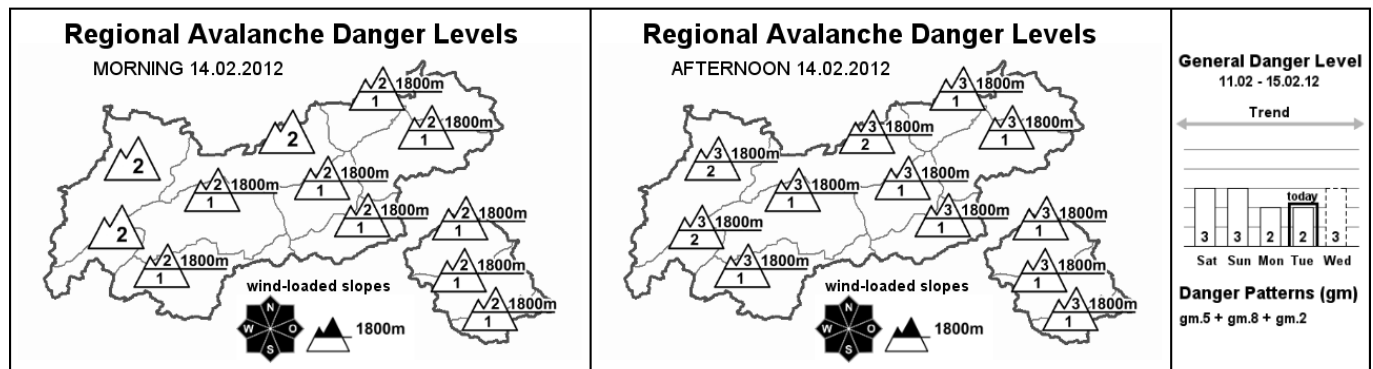


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 14.02.2012, at 07:30



Snowdrift accumulations above the treeline are the major danger

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger still varies in direct proportion to wind influence. Above the treeline, where the wind tends to become stronger with the passing hours and transports the cold, loosely packed snow, the danger level climbs from moderate to considerable over the course of the day. Below that altitude, as well as in most wind protected areas, the danger level can just barely be categorised as low. Backcountry skiers and freeriders still need to exercise great caution towards snowdrift which has accumulated in the last week; the fresher it is, the more easily it can be triggered, usually by only minimum additional loading. Since the wind influence varies even over small surface areas, the distribution of avalanche prone locations is highly irregular, but they occur quite often above the treeline in ridgeline areas as well as in gullies and bowls in all aspects. Visibility permitting, experienced tourers can easily recognize these spots. Full depth snowslides are also still a danger on steep, grassy slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

The snow layering falls into two distinct categories. Near the uppermost surface there is often a very loose layer of faceted crystals; many spots are covered with surface hoar. This is the worst possible bed for snowdrift deposited on top of it, since it effectively hinders bonding. In more deeply embedded layers, the snowpack is solid. Only in high alpine regions is the fundament, which consists of snow from autumn, a layer of depth hoar; however, this is currently unlikely to trigger, due to the generally deep, hard snowpack on top of it.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: Tirol lies wedged between a powerful high pressure system high over the Atlantic and a low pressure system over northern and eastern Europe, in the path of an increasingly moist northerly to northwesterly airstream. Mountain weather today: poor visibility in the Northern Alps, due to heavy cloud cover and intermittent snowfall, which will bring 5 to 10 cm of new fallen snow. On the Main Alpine Ridge, better visibility and less snowfall. In the Southern Alps, partly sunny. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 13 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 19 degrees. Moderate northerly winds at high altitude.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Tomorrow: snowfall and wind, significantly escalating the avalanche danger, presumably to Level 4, High

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe