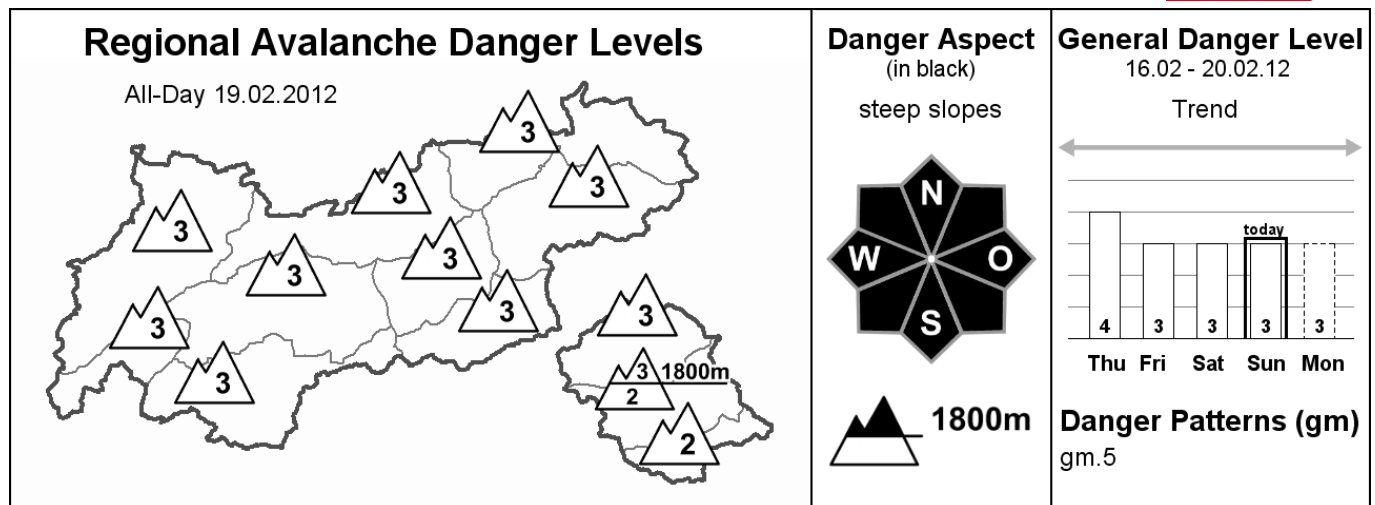


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 19.02.2012, at 07:30



Treacherous avalanche situation unchanged, considerable danger widespread

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche situation in Tirol remains unchanged: the danger level is considerable (upper level). The major peril stems from the new fallen snow and snowdrift from mid-week, which are very poorly bonded with the surface of the old snowpack in general and thus, can be triggered as an avalanche even by minimum additional loading. Avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions. The zone around the treeline should be evaluated more critically than anywhere else; this is where the most avalanches were triggered yesterday. Backcountry skiing and freeriding tours require extensive experience in evaluating avalanche hazards. Holding oneself back from entering steep slopes is urgently recommended.

SNOW LAYERING

The currently high trigger sensitivity of the snowpack was chillingly demonstrated by the high number of avalanches yesterday. The reason: the cold period which came to an end in the middle of this last week mutated the snow surface to faceted, loosely packed and utterly unbonded snow crystals. On top of this classic avalanche surface, fresh fallen snow was deposited from the most recent period of precipitation. And on top of that, the winds deposited snowdrift. The proneness to triggering remains unchanged: high. The upside of the situation is that avalanches generally fracture only in the uppermost layers of the snowpack, not the deeply embedded ones. That means avalanches generally reach medium size.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: From the northwest, a cold front is traversing Tirol today. Tomorrow, Monday, a high pressure system centered over France will increase its dominance. Weather perturbances from the northwest can be expected in the latter part of the week. It will remain relatively mild. Mountain weather today: The mountains will be covered more and more by clouds moving in from the northwest. Intermittent snowfall is anticipated this morning in the Northern Alps; as of midday the snowfall will spread towards the Main Alpine Ridge; by this afternoon, it will reach the southern flank of the Alps. In most places, 5 to 20 cm of snowfall is anticipated. It will turn colder. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 3 to minus 10 degrees by the end of the day; at 3000: minus 9 to minus 16 degrees later on. Moderate westerly winds, particularly at high altitudes.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Generally considerable avalanche danger will continue

Rudi Mair

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe