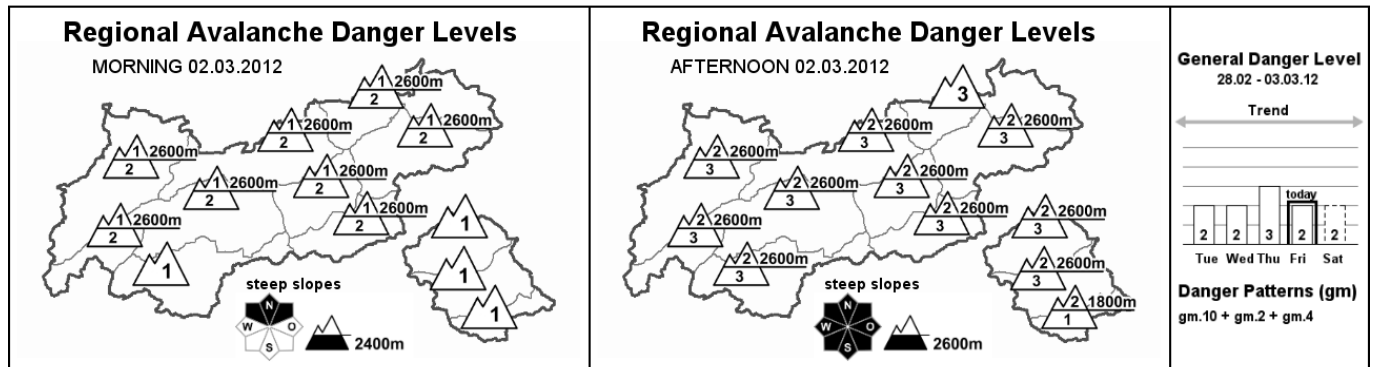


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 02.03.2012, at 07:30



Springtime conditions, the danger comes from full depth snowslides

AVALANCHE DANGER

Classic springtime conditions reign: the avalanche danger level in the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps and in East Tirol is generally low, at least in the early morning hours. In the other regions, the danger below 2600 m is moderate, above that altitude it is low. As the snowpack becomes more moist or wet, the peril increases as of late morning, reaching the danger level "considerable" below about 2600 m. Above that altitude, it remains "moderate". Wet, loosely-packed snow avalanches are expected in extremely steep, sunny terrain. In addition, increasingly frequent full depth snowslides are also anticipated, just as they have often occurred over the last few days. The snowslides can in isolated cases even reach large size, due to the extraordinary snow depths. Backcountry skiers and freeriders should exercise some restraint today, partly because of the daytime loss in snowpack firmness, but particularly on very steep, shady slopes between about 2100 and 2400 m, where slab avalanches can be triggered primarily through large additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

At low and intermediate altitudes and on sunny slopes the snowpack became moist or thoroughly wet yesterday. During a night of clear skies, a melt freeze crust formed which is generally capable of bearing loads above approximately 1800 m. That means an early start will guarantee superb firm snow for the descent. On shady slopes above about 2800 m there is usually still powder snow. As potential slab avalanche weaknesses, the best candidates are the thin, faceted layers in shady, steep terrain between about 2100 and 2400 m which formed during the cold wave in mid-February and again at the beginning of this week. Ordinarily, these layers can be triggered only through large additional loading. The snowpack will again become moist or wet during the course of the day.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: Tirol lies in the path of a powerful high pressure system bringing dry and extremely mild air masses. Over the weekend, the high will weaken, a perturbation will traverse the land on Sunday. Mountain weather today: a sunny and unusually mild day for this juncture of the season, with barely a cloud in the sky and temperatures above zero reaching up to 3000 m. Temperature at 2000 m: plus 9 degrees; at 3000 m: zero degrees. Light to moderate westerly to northwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Continuing springlike conditions, including a daytime danger cycle

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe