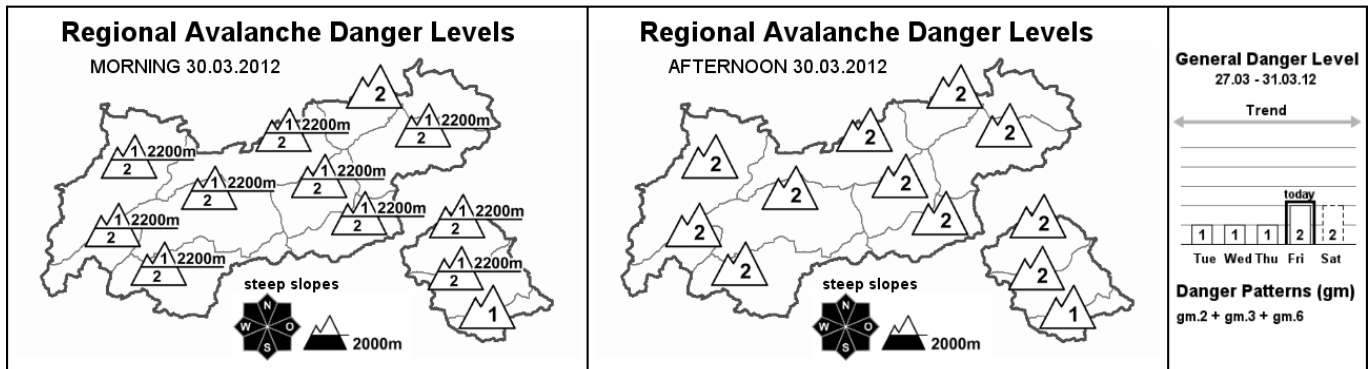


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 30.03.2012, at 07:30



Isolated full depth snowslides, caution towards small snowdrift masses in high alpine regions

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger level is contingent on both altitude and time of day. Below about 2200 m, the danger level during the morning is moderate, above that altitude it is low. In late morning, the danger level above approximately 2200 m rises to moderate. The major peril stems from full depth snowslides which can release on steep, grassy slopes. Such snowslides often warn of imminent danger through glide cracks in the snowpack; thus, areas below glide cracks should be avoided altogether. Further, during the course of the day, fresh, small snowdrift masses will accumulate in high alpine ridgeline areas. They are generally easy to recognize and backcountry skiers or freeriders are likely to trigger avalanches only at high altitudes in very steep terrain. In isolated cases, there are avalanche prone locations on extremely steep, shady slopes above approximately 2300 m wherever the snow is shallow or, on the other hand, wherever there has been little traffic through the winter. In such areas, slab avalanches can be triggered primarily by large additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

The outgoing radiation of the snowpack was inadequate during the night beneath overcast skies, only in East Tirol did it cool sufficiently. Thus, at least in North Tirol, the snowpack remained generally moist at low altitudes; at intermediate altitudes there is a breakable melt-freeze crust, beneath which the snowpack is either moist or thoroughly wet. In high alpine regions, fresh snowdrift masses are accumulating due to strong winds. These are generally well bonded with the old snowpack, except on shady slopes, where the bonding is inadequate, since there is still powder snow on the surface there. In addition, in ridgeline areas above approximately 3000 m, surface hoar has formed in some places (Nigg effect) which, however, has often been transported by the winds and so will not exercise undue influence. In places where the snow is shallow above approximately 2300 m on shady slopes, there is in isolated cases a layer of depth hoar near the ground which could serve as a bed surface for slab avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: a swiftly moving northwesterly air current will dominant weather in Tirol over the weekend. Following a brief improvement on Saturday, the next cold front will arrive on Sunday, bringing noticeably lower temperatures. Conditions are then expected to improve and on Monday an intermediate high will prevail. Mountain weather today: In the Southern Alps, strong winds and sunshine. On and northwards of the Main Alpine Ridge, the peaks will mostly be shrouded in cloud, accompanied by strong northwesterly winds and snow showers. The 5 to 10 cm of new fallen snow, most of which fell in the eastern ranges, will be intensely transported. Tonight, skies will begin to clear in high alpine regions. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 2 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 8 degrees. Storm-strength northwesterly winds all day long; in the western part of the Main Alpine Ridge winds will be slightly weaker.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Full depth snowslides continue to be the major danger

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe