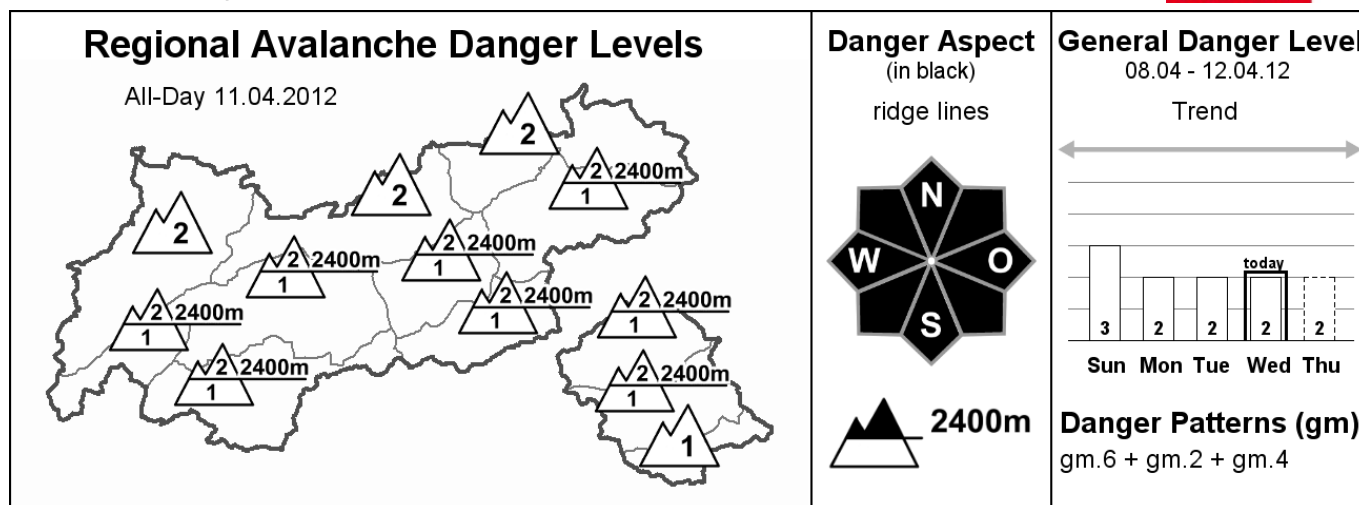


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Wednesday, 11.04.2012, at 07:30



Caution urged towards snowdrift accumulations, especially in steep, high alpine ridgeline areas

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger level corresponds to altitude, except in the northern regions where it is generally moderate. Above approximately 2400 m, the danger level is moderate, below that altitude it is low. With the predicted snowfall today, the danger may then rise to moderate, particularly below 2400 m and in the regions with heaviest precipitation, i.e. Stubai, Tux, Zillertal Alps. The decisive factor is the wind, which will probably be insignificant. The major peril still stems from recently formed snowdrift accumulations, whose frequency and proneness to triggering increase with ascending altitude. On very steep high alpine slopes adjacent to ridgelines, caution is urged: small slab avalanches can be triggered even by minimum additional loading. An additional potential hazard: full depth snowslides on steep, grassy slopes, particularly where there are glide cracks in the snowpack.

SNOW LAYERING

In northern regions the snowpack couldn't consolidate as well as in the south, since the northern skies were cloudy. Thus, below about 2000 m in the north there is only a very thin melt-freeze crust, if one formed at all. Further to the south, the crust is generally capable of bearing loads. The old snowpack beneath this melt-freeze crust is wet at low and intermediate altitudes; on steep, sunny slopes up to about 2500 m it is at least moist on the surface. The borderline area between the cold, loosely packed, new fallen snow and the recently accumulated snowdrift is a hazard; a number of such avalanches have recently been triggered by backcountry skiers and freeriders. The beginnings of faceted snow crystals have formed on the melt-freeze crust of last week which was then was blanketed with fresh fallen snow; this, however, based on recent snow analysis, is a potential bed surface for slab avalanches only in isolated cases.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: A cold front will reach Tyrol today from the west, moving towards us from the low pressure system over Scandinavia. Simultaneously, another low is forming over northern Italy. Tomorrow, Thursday, an intermediate high will prevail; on Friday, a westerly airstream tending towards showers; on the weekend, a low will dominate. Mountain weather today: in North Tyrol's eastern regions, pleasant foehn conditions still reign this morning. A cold front will move in from the west, bringing lower temperatures and snowfall, spreading to all regions by this afternoon. For a short period, heavy snowfall is expected: 10 to 30 cm, in some places up to 40 cm of fresh fallen snow is anticipated, most of it on the Main Alpine Ridge and in the Dolomites. Tonight, conditions will settle down again. Temperature at 2000 m: dropping to minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: dropping to minus 11 degrees. The southerly winds will slacken off this morning, shifting to westerly-to-northwesterly as the cold front moves in, at moderate velocity.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Frequent loosely packed snow avalanches are expected on sunny slopes tomorrow

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe