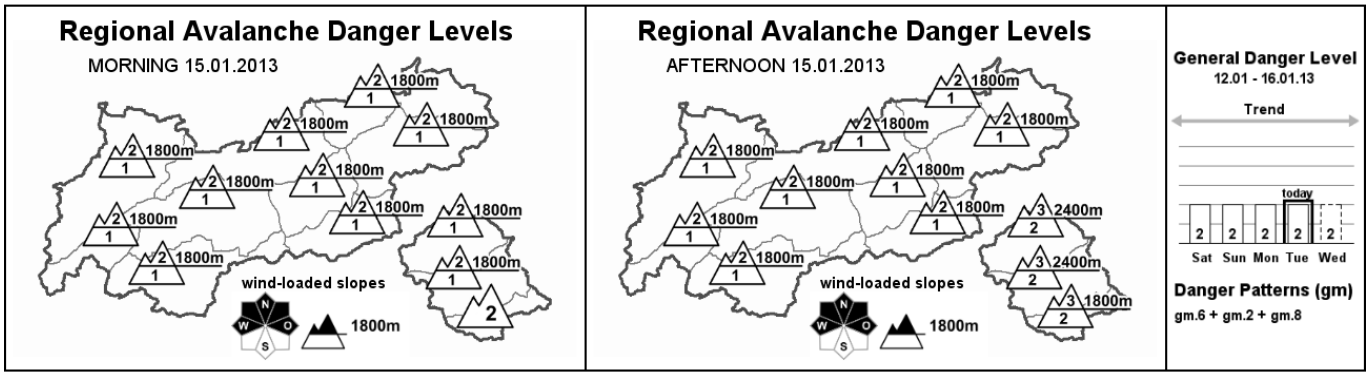
Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Tuesday, 15.01.2013, at 07:30



Beware fresh snowdrift

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is contingent on wind influence. Above the tree line the hazards are still moderate, as a result of the generally light winds (stronger velocity only regionally). Below that altitude the danger level is frequently low. The conditions in southern East Tirol, where there has been heavy snowfall, and wherever there are strong winds, are less favourable, i.e. in the southern Ötztal and Stubai Alps, the Tux Alps and the western sector of the Northern Alps. The major peril stems from fresh snowdrift accumulations which with experience in assessing avalanche hazards (and the requisite visibility) can be easily recognized. Such drifted masses occur frequently on west to north to east facing slopes near ridgelines and behind terrain edges. In very steep terrain even minimum additional loading is sufficient to trigger these drifted masses. Their spread tends to increase with ascending altitude. In the inneralpine regions and along the Main Alpine Ridge slab releases through large additional loading in very steep, shady terrain above approximately 2300 m continue to be possible, especially in places where the snow is shallow. Furthermore, isolated full depth snowslides on steep, grassy slopes are a danger, which in East Tirol is heightened by snowfall and wind impact.

SNOW LAYERING

It has once again snowed in Tirol, most of which fell in southern East Tirol (up to 40 cm). Towards the north, there was incrementally less snowfall, in North Tirol generally about 5 cm. Winds are highly varied, mostly light, but in some places strong enough to transport the new fallen powder. Snowdrift can trigger at the point of contact to the loosely packed fresh fallen snow surface in zones near the tree line. In regions along the Main Alpine Ridge and the inneralpine regions there is a layer of loose depth hoar embedded between crusts inside the snowpack, and also faceted snow crystals which in isolated cases could serve as a bed surface for avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: divided in two. North and west of the Inn Valley it will be predominantly sunny accompanied by moderate southerly winds. Southwards thereof, particularly in South and East Tirol, cloud will dominate, fog veil the peaks and heavy snowfall reign. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 7 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 14 degrees. Weather in general: A low pressure zone centered over France is bringing moist and cold air masses from the south to the Eastern Alps. In South and East Tirol and along the Main Alpine Ridge the barrier effect will prevail, resulting in heavy snowfall in places. In northern regions, foehn-induced bright intervals will appear.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Increasing wind impact will heighten the danger

Patrick Nairz **Translated by Jeffrey McCabe**