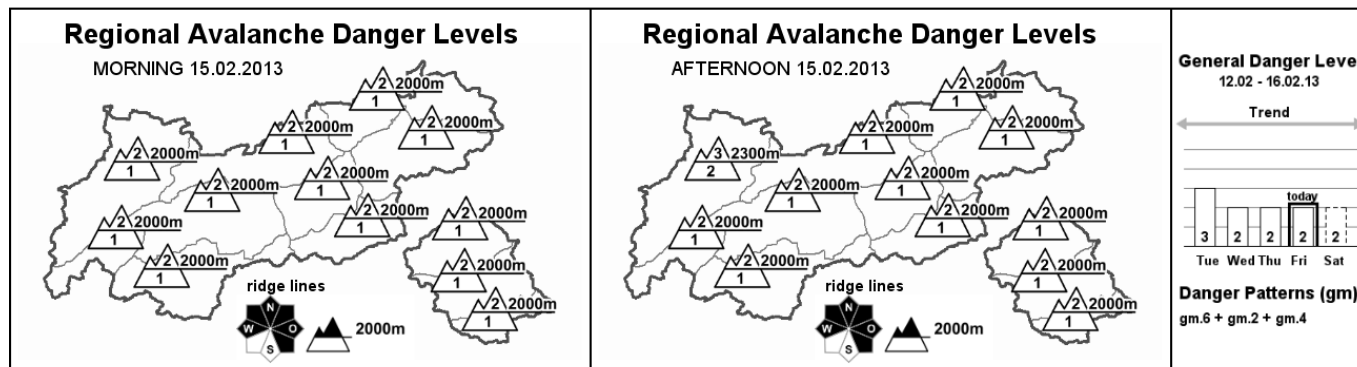


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Friday, 15.02.2013, at 07:30



Beware small, freshly formed snowdrift accumulations near ridgelines

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger remains contingent on altitude. Above approximately 2000 m it is moderate in general; beneath that altitude, low. In the Arlberg and Ausserfern regions the danger level will possibly rise to considerable this afternoon, due to the intensifying winds above 2300 m. Avalanche prone locations for backcountry tours are the snowdrift accumulations, particularly on W to N to SE facing slopes as well as behind terrain edges. Danger zones are generally small sized, but can be triggered even by minimum additional loading. They have been blanketed over by recent snowfall, making them difficult to recognize. In typical foehn corridors the danger zones are also near the treeline. In isolated cases, small slab avalanches can release between about 1900 and 2300 m in very steep, wind-impacted terrain even down into the old snowpack through large additional loading. Full depth snowslides continue to be observed and are still possible on steep, grass covered slopes, particularly where glide cracks "announce" imminent danger.

SNOW LAYERING

In western regions of North Tirol, it has already begun to snow. In Ausserfern there has been up to 10 cm of fresh fallen snow already, amidst mostly light winds, in the Northern Alps moderate. The loose, light snow can easily be transported. Slab avalanches can most readily release at the borderline point of contact between the loose, cold snowfall and the recently formed snowdrift accumulations. The fresher the drifted mass, the more easily it can trigger. In isolated cases, the surface hoar which formed particularly at high altitudes over the last few days can heighten the trigger sensitivity of the snowdrift. In the old snowpack between approximately 1900 and 2300 m in North Tirol as well as in northern East Tirol, there are layers of faceted crystals near the rain crusts which in isolated cases can provide bed surfaces for avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: the Northern Alps and the Main Alpine Ridge are shrouded in cloud, light snowfall continues intermittently, particularly in the Northern Alps, impeding visibility correspondingly. In the Southern Alps the clouds are generally above summit altitude and it is dry. Wintery cold temperatures. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 7 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 13 degrees. Light to moderate westerly to northwesterly winds. Weather in general: A perturbation is traversing Tirol from the west, bringing snowfall on Friday. In its wake, a weak high pressure zone will follow, before on Sunday a high pressure front will move in from the west during the day.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Favourable conditions go on, the major danger continues to be fresh snowdrift.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe