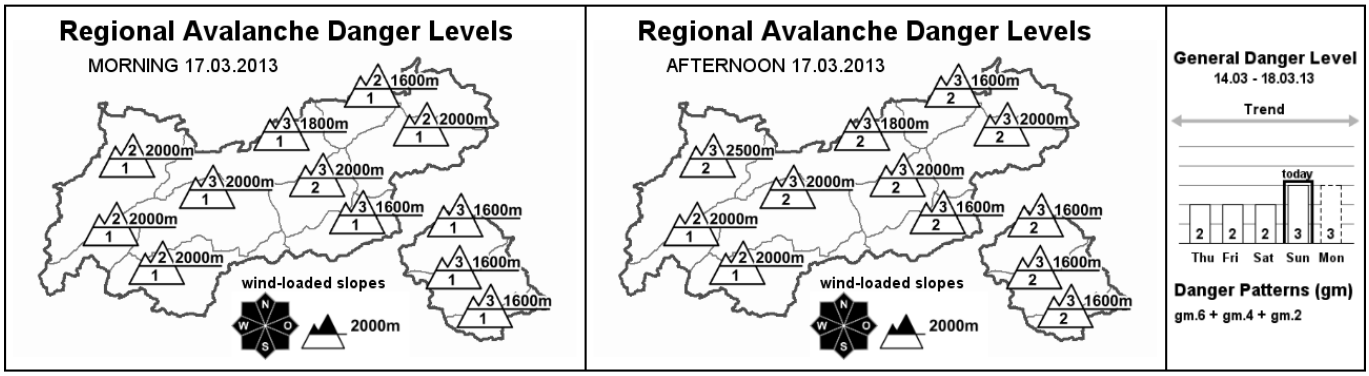
Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol
Sunday, 17.03.2013, at 07:30



Heightened avalanche danger due to storm strength southerly winds. Beware fresh snowdrift!

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger is contingent on altitude and is currently a result of wind impact and snowfall from last week. Since the eastern regions received the heaviest snowfall and the wind has now intensified, the danger level in eastern regions is considerable above the treeline; below the treeline it is still low in some places, but over the course of the day could rise to moderate, due to wind influence. Caution in the typical foehn corridors in wooded areas! The avalanche prone locations are freshly formed snowdrift accumulations, especially above the treeline on W to N to E facing slopes, also in other aspects above about 2300 m, where even minimum additional loading is sufficient to release a slab avalanche. Very steep, shady terrain in eastern regions in particular also have to expect naturally triggered small slab avalanches today. In western regions conditions are far better, snowdrift accumulations are generally shallower and more seldom, nonetheless can be easily triggered. Wind protected zones have favourable conditions. On steep, grass covered slopes full depth snowslides continue to be a threat, especially below 2400 m on sunny slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

Yesterday did not bring the warmth and stabilisation of the snowpack which was anticipated. The air was simply too dry, the temperatures too low. That means that shady slopes above about 1500m, and in all aspects above about 2300 m, still have powder snow with superficial snowdrift or a very thin melt-freeze crust on top of it. This snow can be easily transported. Poor bonding between fresh snowdrift and the cold, light, loose new fallen snow beneath it has to be assumed! Also on top of surface-near hardened crusts on sunny slopes between 2300 and 2800m there are faceted crystals which could serve as a potential weak layer for slab avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: A low over the British Isles has given rise to a southwesterly airstream which is bringing foehn winds to the northern flank of the Alps. Tomorrow, Monday, a cold front will bring the foehn wind gradually to an end. In addition, a low over Italy will create a barrier cloud effect in East Tirol. Mountain weather today: The wind will be omnipresent in the mountains today, as will sunshine on the northern flank of the Alps at least in the early part of the day. This afternoon cloud will move in, the light become increasingly diffuse. South of the Main Ridge in East and South Tirol there will be significantly less sunshine, tonight it will begin to snow there. Temperature at 2000m: minus 6 degrees; at 3000m: minus 12 degrees. Strong, in the Tux Alps and the high alpine regions of the Main Ridge, storm strength southerly to southwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

General deterioration of avalanche situation, particularly in southern regions

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