



DANGER PATTERNS (DP): [dp.1](#) - deep persistent weak layer; [dp.6](#) - cold, loose, new fallen snow and wind; [dp.2](#) - sliding snow

Considerable danger in southern regions above 1800m, decreasing towards the north

AVALANCHE DANGER

In the southern regions where there has been heaviest snowfall, e.g. East Tirol and along the Main Alpine Ridge, the danger above 1800 m is still considerable. Particular caution is required in very steep west-northwest to north to east-northeast facing terrain. Most avalanche prone locations are found in these aspects near the treeline. At high altitudes and in high alpine regions there are fewer danger zones, but that heightens the hazards in the other aspects, where the depth hoar embedded inside the old snowpack in steep terrain, particularly in transitions from shallow to deep snow, can release a slab avalanche even by minimum additional loading. In ridgeline areas, caution urged towards freshly drifted snow masses. Further to the north conditions are more favourable but there, too, special caution is urged towards older snowdrift accumulations in steep, shady terrain. In East Tirol, furthermore, full depth avalanches are possible on steep, grassy slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack is settling and stabilizing gradually but in shady, very steep terrain is still prone to triggering. This applies in particular to treeline zones where the old snowpack frequently has depth hoar accompanied by melt-freeze crusts interspersed inside it. At higher altitudes the old snowpack was very irregular and faceted before the snowfall on Christmas, making avalanches possible where nests of depth hoar lurk. In ridgeline areas there is poor bonding of fresh snowdrift and the loosely packed new fallen snow. The uppermost snowpack surface often evidences graupel including fresh surface hoar.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: generally sunny and mild, very little wind, perfect conditions for wintertime sports. Thin cirrus cloud far above summit level will pass through, but weaken the sunshine only slightly. Tonight, clear skies, in the early hours of New Year's Day cloud will move in from the west, temperatures recede slightly. Temperature at 2000m: -1 degree; at 3000m: -7 degrees.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The avalanche danger will diminish gradually.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe