



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

Precarious avalanche situation above the treeline

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche situation in backcountry Tirol above the treeline is treacherous, the danger level is considerable widespread. In southern regions (southern East Tirol, southern Stubai and Ötztal Alps) the coming snowfall could even increase the danger level to High (4). In those regions, stormy, intermittently gale-force winds will bring about increasingly frequent naturally triggered avalanches on high altitude west to north to east facing slopes. The avalanches will generally attain medium size, but could in isolated cases reach large size. In general, slab avalanches can even now be triggered by minimum additional loading in steep terrain. Whoever is in outlying terrain today urgently needs deep knowledge of avalanche hazards. Only in the much-used regions of North Tirol where there is far less snow is the danger level lower. Furthermore, beware full depth snowslides on steep, grass-covered slopes in East Tirol.

SNOW LAYERING

There was once again snowfall in Tirol, most of it in southern East Tirol (20-40 cm; in remaining regions 10-20 cm). The snowfall was accompanied by storm-force winds which will intensify still further today. In southern regions 30 cm of additional new fallen snow is anticipated. The borderline between the loosely packed powder snow and the snowdrift beneath it marks a potential bed surface for slab avalanches to release. At higher altitudes where snowfall has been heaviest there are fractures in the weakly bonded layers of snow near the ground on very steep SW to N to NE facing slopes which stem from early winter. If the weight of snow on top of this layer becomes too great, the entire snowpack could collapse.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: gale-strength winds, in central Tirol reaching maximum velocity around midday, in the Zillertal and Tauern peaks this afternoon. Gusts of more than 150 km/h will not be seldom in exposed terrain. From the Main Ridge southwards, peaks will be in cloud, snowfall will begin and then intensify. Temperature at 2000m: -2 degrees; at 3000m: -4 degrees. Gale-force southerly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The treacherous situation for skiers continues.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe