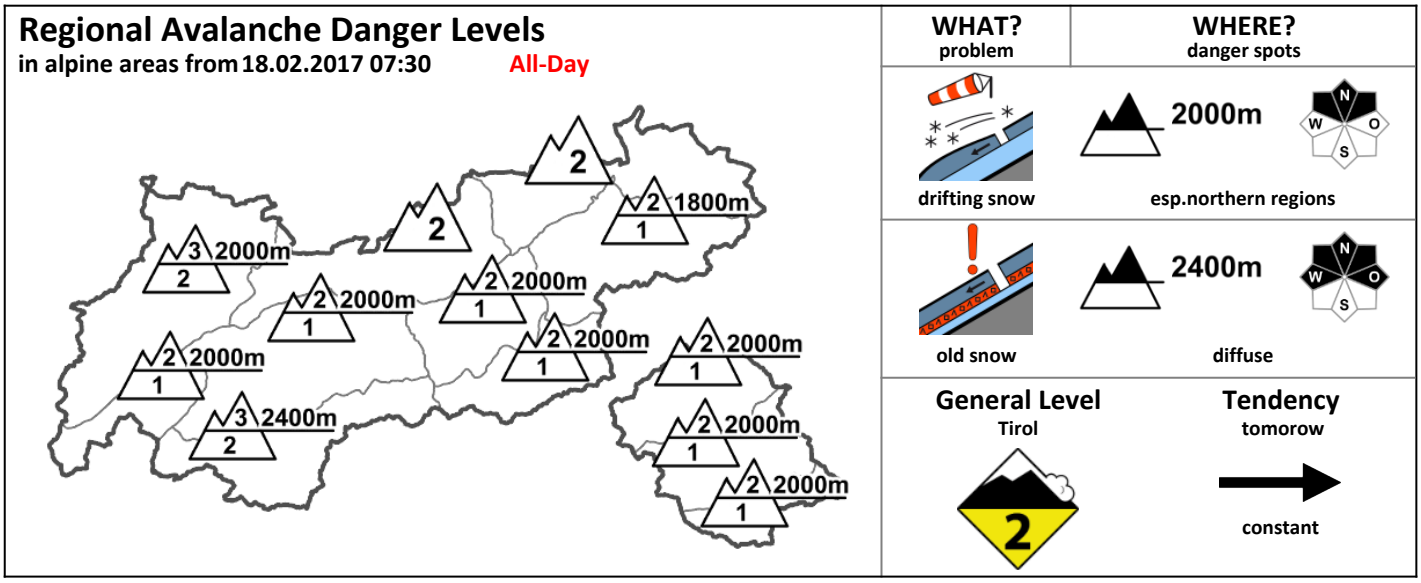
Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Saturday, 18.02.2017, at 07:30 Uhr



DANGER PATTERNS (DP): dp.6 - loose snow and wind dp.1 - deep persistent weak layer

Fresh snowdrifts on shady slopes PLUS old-snow problem above 2400m

AVALANCHE DANGER

In Ausserfern which received the heaviest snowfall, considerable avalanche danger prevails above 2000m. The danger is also (still) considerable in the southern Ötztal Alps above 2400m. Elsewhere danger is moderate; below 2000m often low. As a result of last night's snowfall, new danger zones have been created, most of them in northern regions in unused terrain on shady slopes. Namely, new snowdrift accumulations which are easy to trigger. They can be easily recognized with backcountry experience. The other problem is more diffuse and difficult to spot, namely, the old snow problem above 2400m, in typical foehn lanes on shady slopes and near ridgelines somewhat lower down. This applies mostly to W-N-E slopes, and most of all on shady slopes, especially critical in untracked terrain. Avalanches can trigger by large additional loading primarily where the snow is shallow. Remote triggerings are possible in flat terrain, particularly in the southern Ötztal Alps. In sunny, extremely steep terrain where snowfall has been heaviest, loose-snow avalanches can now be expected.

SNOW LAYERING

Over the last 24 hours there has been snowfall widespread throughout Tirol, most in Ausserfern and the eastern sector of the Northern Alps (up to 25 cm). Otherwise generally 20 cm, less towards the south. Winds were active, creating new, small-sized snowdrift accumulations. In shady, untracked terrain the bonding of the drifts to the base beneath them is poor. The old-snow problem threatens above all in thin, loose layers composed of faceted-crystal snow, i.e. depth hoar, which formed in January. These occur usually below hardened wind crusts and melt-freeze crusts. Stability tests have shown that one now needs larger additional loading to trigger them. However fracture propagation is still a great threat, should an avalanche trigger.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Mountain weather today: in the northern barrier zones, clouds prevail which will gradually disperse throughout the day. There is generally 20 cm of new fallen snow and a little more will come during the daytime. This afternoon conditions will improve and it will turn sunny. Temperature at 2000m: -5 degrees; at 3000m_ -11 degrees. Brisk N/NE winds, stronger in the Hohe Tauern.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The situation will gradually improve.

Patrick Nairz **Translated by Jeffrey McCabe**