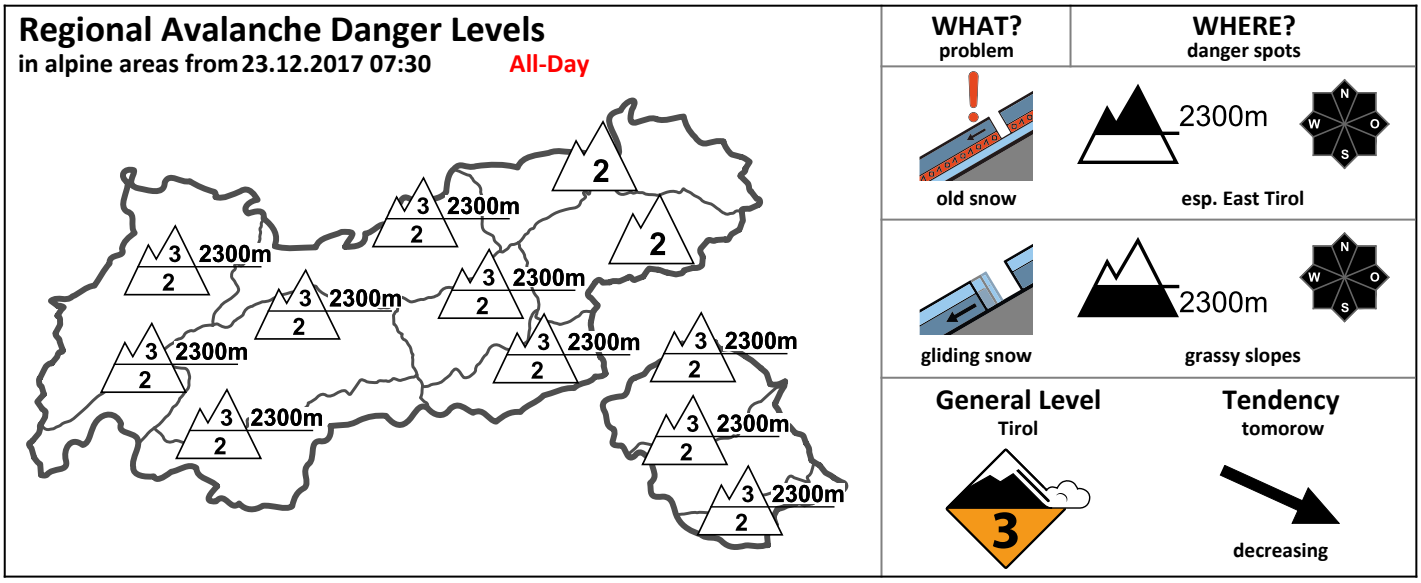
Avalanche Bulletin
of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol
Saturday, 23.12.2017, at 07:30 Uhr



DANGER PATTERNS (DP): dp.2 - gliding snow dp.1 - deep persistent weak layer dp.6 - loose snow and wind

Considerable avalanche danger widespread above 2300 m

AVALANCHE DANGER

Avalanche danger above 2300 m in Tirol is considerable over widespread areas. Least favourable of all are conditions in East Tirol: a weak layer lurks inside the snowpack above 2300 m which can be triggered by minimum additional loading. Shady terrain is the most critical. In North Tirol the old snow problem is less threatening, to trigger an avalanche usually large additional loading is necessary. Most at risk is shady, very steep, wind-protected and relative untracked terrain above 2300 m, as well as sunny, very steep terrain above 2700 m. Particularly in transitions from shallow to deep snow, avalanches can be triggered. Elsewhere, and throughout Tirol, caution is urged towards fresh snowdrift accumulations, also above 2300 m more than anywhere else. They are usually small-sized, but can be released by minimum additional loading. Danger zones are found especially in very steep ridgeline terrain. The rain and warmth have enhanced the risks of gliding avalanches on steep, grass-covered slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

Rainfall, higher temperatures, have moistened the snowpack up to about 2000 m. During the night, skies cleared somewhat, thereby forming a melt-freeze crust on the surface. The old snow problem in East Tirol is the most glaring risk currently. This layer consists of faceted snow crystals (formed in early December) which are now blanketed by bonded snow. In sunny terrain, this layer lies beneath a melt-freeze crust, which makes fracture propagation more easily possible. The altitude zone 2300-2800 m is particularly endangered. At high altitude the snow layer on top of the weak layer is harder and deeper, thereby reducing the proneness to triggering. Recently deposited light, fluffy powder above 2300 m in North Tirol is the weak layer for fresh drifts.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

On the northern flank of the Alps, snowfall and rainfall will end. From the western sector of the Main Alpine Ridge, clouds and fog will disperse, it will turn increasingly sunny. South of the Main Ridge it will be sunny from the start. Temperature at 2000 m: -3 to +1 degree; at 3000 m: -7 to -3 degrees. Strong to stormy NW winds at high altitude.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Avalanche danger will diminish.

Patrick Nairz **Translated by Jeffrey McCabe**