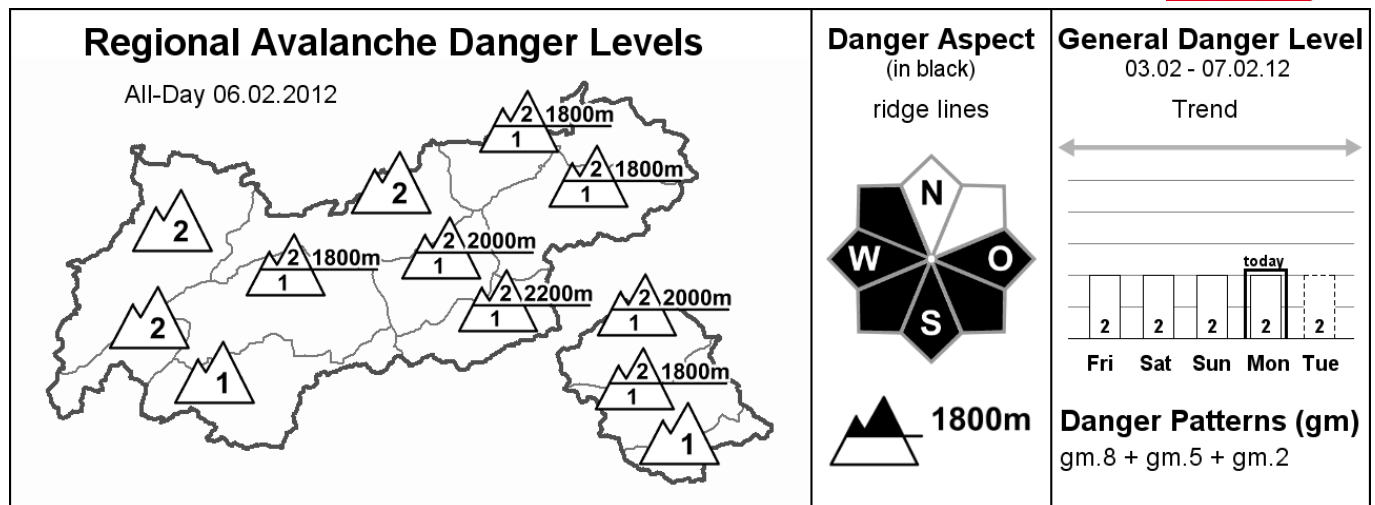


Avalanche Bulletin

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Monday, 06.02.2012, at 07:30



Caution urged towards small, easily triggered snowdrift accumulations above the treeline

AVALANCHE DANGER

The avalanche danger level in Silvretta-Samnaun, Arlberg-Ausserfern and the western sector of the Northern Alps is moderate in general; elsewhere it depends on altitude and wind impact. Wherever strong winds have been blowing during the last few days, small but highly trigger sensitive snowdrift masses have accumulated, especially in ridgeline areas above the treeline in eastern to southern to northwestern aspects, but also in gullies and bowls. With a certain experience, these danger zones can be easily spotted. An additional peril remains the full depth snowslides which can slide down steep, grassy slopes from the ground. In spite of the icy temperatures, many such avalanches are being observed currently, which is why our recommendation to avoid all places below so-called glide cracks (which warn of imminent danger) remains in force. Such cracks appear with great frequency below about 2400 m on steep, sunny slopes.

SNOW LAYERING

The snowpack surface is transforming, due to the extremely low temperatures. That means thin melt-freeze crusts at low and intermediate altitudes are increasingly dissolving. Subsequently, faceted snow crystals are forming in their place. In addition, surface hoar is being blanketed over by very dry, light snowfall. This kind of snowpack generally bonds quite poorly with snowdrift masses which are then deposited atop it. Thus, avalanches can be triggered with unusual ease by backcountry skiers and freeriders.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

Weather in general: a high pressure system which stretches from Siberia to central Europe is bringing icy cold, continental air masses to Tirol. Tomorrow, a low over southeastern Europe will supply us with moist air masses, the icy cold will temporarily recede, but return in the latter part of the week. Mountain weather today: it will be a very sunny, very cold day, protection against double-digit temperatures is imperative. Particularly in the Lower Inn Valley, visibility may be somewhat impaired by residual fog. Temperature at 2000 m: between minus 21 degrees in the eastern Lower Inn Valley and minus 13 degrees near the Ortler range; at 3000 m: minus 21 degrees. Light northeasterly winds, at higher altitudes, winds will reach moderate strength.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

As wind intensity increases, new snowdrift masses will accumulate

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe