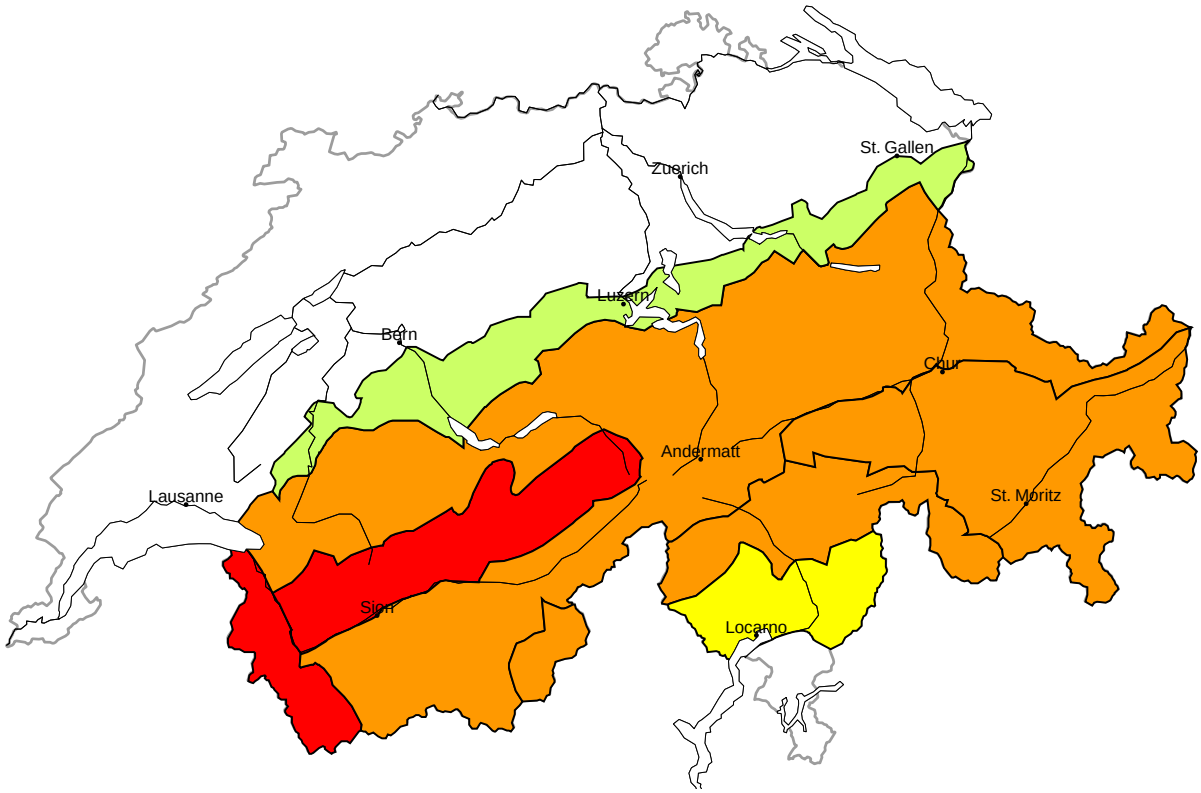
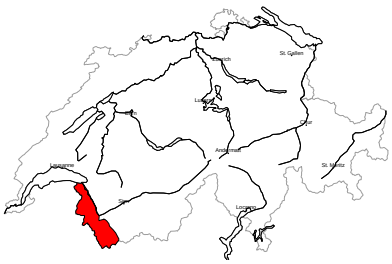
Avalanche danger

updated on 13.12.2023, 08:00



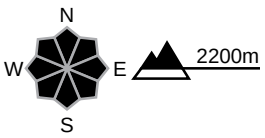
region A

High (4-)



New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The large quantity of fresh snow and also in particular the wind slabs that are being formed by the sometimes strong westerly wind are prone to triggering. Natural avalanches are to be expected. In their paths avalanches can entrain the wet snow. They can reach very large size. In the typical avalanche paths the avalanches can reach valley bottoms at relatively high altitudes and endanger transportation routes that are exposed.
Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily. The conditions are very critical for winter sport activities outside marked and open pistes.

Considerable (3)

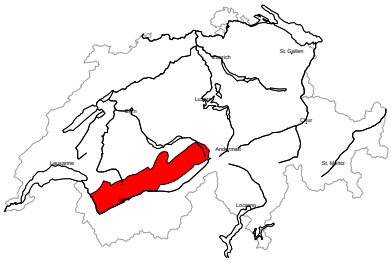
Gliding snow

Below approximately 2200 m more gliding avalanches are to be expected, even large ones in isolated cases. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 13. December 2023

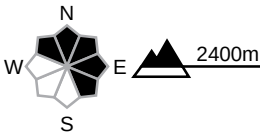
region B

High (4-)



New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The large quantity of fresh snow and also in particular the wind slabs that are being formed by the sometimes strong westerly wind are prone to triggering. Natural avalanches are possible. In their paths avalanches can entrain the wet snow. They can reach very large size in isolated cases. In the typical avalanche paths the avalanches can reach valley bottoms at relatively high altitudes and endanger transportation routes that are exposed.
Even single winter sport participants can release avalanches easily. The conditions are very critical for winter sport activities outside marked and open pistes.

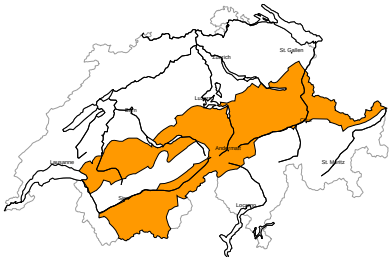
Considerable (3)

Gliding snow

Below approximately 2200 m more gliding avalanches are to be expected, even large ones in isolated cases. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

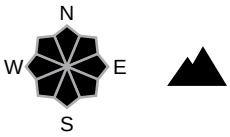
region C

Considerable (3+)



New snow, Gliding snow

Avalanche prone locations



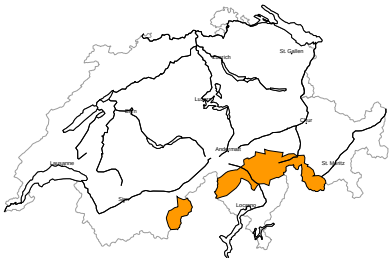
Danger description

The avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found on steep slopes above approximately 2200 m. The large quantity of fresh snow and also in particular the wind slabs that are being formed by the westerly wind are prone to triggering. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach large size in isolated cases. Natural avalanches are possible. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for caution and restraint.
Below approximately 2200 m more gliding avalanches are to be expected, even large ones in isolated cases. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be endangered.

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 13. December 2023

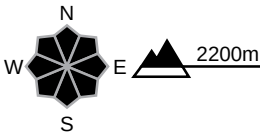
region D

Considerable (3=)



Wind slab, Persistent weak layers

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh snow of the last few days and the wind slabs are lying on top of a weakly bonded old snowpack at elevated altitudes. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can be triggered in the old snowpack and reach medium size.
Ski touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

Moderate (2)

Gliding snow

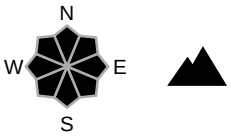
In all aspects small to medium-sized gliding avalanches are possible below approximately 2200 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

region E

Considerable (3-)

Wind slab, Gliding snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

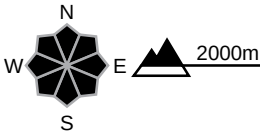
The avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found on steep slopes above approximately 2200 m. Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released by a single winter sport participant. Additionally avalanches can also penetrate deep layers and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are barely recognisable. Defensive route selection is advisable.
Below approximately 2200 m gliding avalanches are possible, in particular medium-sized ones. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided.

region F

Moderate (2=)

No distinct avalanche problem

Avalanche prone locations



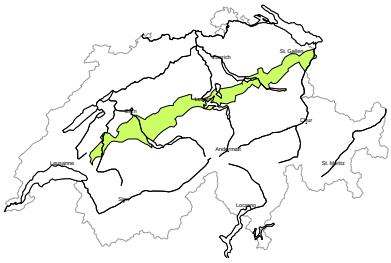
Danger description

Avalanches can in some cases be released in near-surface layers. They can in isolated cases release deeper layers of the snowpack and reach medium size. The avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in gullies and bowls, and behind abrupt changes in the terrain.
Careful route selection is recommended.

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 13. December 2023

region G

Low (1)



No distinct avalanche problem

Only a little snow is lying. The snowpack will be wet all the way through.
On very steep grassy slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible. In the vicinity of peaks small wind slabs will form. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in extreme terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 12.12.2023, 17:00

Snowpack

With rain to high altitudes and snowfall and wind on top of this, avalanches, some of them large, occurred in particular in Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps. At high altitudes, there is about twice as much snow in many areas as there normally is at the beginning of December. The snowpack structure there is generally favourable. Deep in the old snowpack, around older rain crusts there are thin weak layers of angular crystals, which in isolated cases are prone to triggering. In the south, the snow depths are below average and the weak layers are therefore closer to the surface. There in particular, the older weak layers may be released, including by people in some cases.
At intermediate altitudes, the snowpack has been weakened by the rain. It is increasingly stabilising as a consequence of falling temperatures, but gliding avalanches are still possible on slippery ground below 2000 m.

Observed weather review Tuesday, 12.12.2023

It was very cloudy with precipitation, which was sometimes heavy in the west and north. The snowfall level was around 2200 m in the west and 1700 m in the southeast.

Fresh snow
From Monday afternoon to Tuesday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow fell above approximately 2500 m:

- Northern Alpine Ridge and extreme west of Lower Valais: 30 to 40 cm;
- rest of Valais, rest of the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge and northern Prättigau: 10 to 20 cm;
- less elsewhere.

This means that the following snowfall has been registered above approximately 2500 m since the precipitation started on Sunday:

- Northern Alpine Ridge and extreme west of Lower Valais: 50 to 80 cm;
- rest of Valais, rest of the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge, Prättigau to Samnaun: 30 to 50 cm;
- rest of northern Ticino, rest of Grisons: 10 to 30 cm.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between +3 °C in the west and +1 °C in the east.

Wind
Moderate to strong westerly winds blew on the northern flank of the Alps and generally at high altitudes.

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 13. December 2023

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 13.12.2023

It will remain very cloudy with precipitation. The snowfall level will drop rapidly from around 2000 m to around 1000-1400 m. On Wednesday, most of the precipitation will fall in the west with moderate to strong westerly winds, and then on Thursday, mainly in the north with northwesterly winds.

Fresh snow
From Tuesday afternoon to Wednesday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated above approximately 1500 m:

- extreme west of Lower Valais: 30 to 60 cm;
- Northern Alpine Ridge, rest of Lower Valais, northern Grisons, Samnaun: 20 to 30 cm, up to 40 cm in some locations;
- rest of the northern flank of the Alps, rest of Valais: 10 to 20 cm;
- less elsewhere.

Temperature
At midday at 2000 m, between +3 °C in the north and -1 °C in the south.

Wind
- Moderate to strong winds will blow from the west.
- There will be an increasingly strong northerly wind in the afternoon in the south.

Outlook through Friday, 15.12.2023

It will remain very cloudy with precipitation. On Thursday, 20 to 40 cm of snow will fall on the Northern Alpine Ridge and in Lower Valais; 10 to 20 cm of snow will fall in the other regions of the northern flank of the Alps, Valais and northern Grisons and in the western Jura. At midday on Friday, the precipitation will end and it will be sunny in the west and south. There will be moderate winds, with winds blowing strongly from the north on the Main Alpine Ridge and to the south of this.
On Thursday, the avalanche danger will increase somewhat in the north. It will decrease slightly again on Friday. In the south, the avalanche danger will not change significantly.