

3.Considerable
Dangerous conditions, conservative decision making essential.

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No Rating
Not enough snow on the ground to create avalanche conditions.

Avalanche Danger Scale

5. Extreme
4. High
3. Considerable
2. Moderate
1. Low
? Unknown

MS OUTDOOR SAFETY

This 'Backcountry Avalanche Advisory' is provided as a public service by the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, Inc. It is intended as an advisory only.

Primary Avalanche Danger

STORM SLAB

Dangerous Aspects

3 Highest Danger Rating

Likelihood

Size

Trend

Time of day

Description:
We have had 220mm / 2.2m of snow throughout the last five days, from the NW. We have had the odd settle patch of weather during the day otherwise its been front after front. The FL has been fluctuating between 1400 and 1800m. A further 100mm plus could fall through the next 48 hours. With the FL set to lower to 1400m. Expect wind slabs to form lee to the NW on multiple layers of wind slab. Good time to let the hills settle down, as the real Fiordland weather comes back from holiday.

Secondary Avalanche Danger

PERSISTENT SLAB

Dangerous Aspects

3 Highest Danger Rating

Likelihood

Size

Trend

Time of day

Description:
This PWL still remains in isolated pockets. Due to the very cool early season conditions. We have suspect layers such as sugary facets, and Hoar crystals deep in the snow pack. Mainly living in the Shady aspects. (southern). warm rain last week and warmer temps have cleaned out some slopes below 2000m. However observations still confirm that this extreme cold snow pack is taking a while to bond / warm up and still exists in isolated pockets above 1700m. Watch Shady aspects that are wind loaded and show no signs of previous avalanching. (more so above 2000m). NW storms have created bridging layers over this PWL. A single person may struggle to set a large avalanche off, however the right combination of a rain, or a group of people, snow, earthquake could be the trigger.

Tertiary Avalanche Danger

LOOSE WET

Dangerous Aspects

2 Highest Danger Rating

Likelihood

Size

Trend

Time of day

Description:
Loose wets slides can be expected during the heat of the day when/ if the sun comes out. if the sun does come out between fronts and the sun gets stuck in to the top layer of the snow expect small, quite, slow moving point release avalanches. They will start out of steeper terrain or below rock outcrops. be cautions of run outs and what this debris could be doing to the above hazards.

Current Snowpack Conditions

The early winter cold conditions have set up some suspect layering in the snow pack above 1700m. Layers consisting of Sugary facets and hoar crystals. The shady Aspects are holding there coolness in spite of some good warm NW rain we have had lately. If traveling above 1600m the snow is full of random layers. If the slopes show sign of previous avalanches then these layers may have been cleaned out. However are now re-loading. thanks to over 2m of snow out of the NW in the last 5 days. New wind slabs have been forming lee to the NW above 1800m. In general the Northern half aspects above 1700m are slowly improving. Wet slides and wet slabs have been active the last few days. however are showing signs of slowing down as the FL lowers.

Recent Avalanche Activity

Numerous small loose wet slides mainly around size 1 maybe two were observed on the 10th in the higher alpine (above 1700m) mainly on sun affected slopes. Two slab avalanches were observed on the Milford Track out of NE 1700-1800m size 3. and ran to valley floor. A couple of big events were observed on the 7th. these were a combination of wind / wet slab around 1800m lee to the NW. Size 3 and 3.5. This was due to the heavy rain pulse and rising FL

Mountain Weather

SW changing to NW Friday. FL 1600m lowering to 1400m on Saturday. rain / snow overnight Friday. Clearing slightly before a bigger front arrives Late Saturday. Up to 90mm predicted in places. Sunday rain clearing NW swinging eventually around to the S FL lowering to 1000m with possible snow showers

For more information go to: <http://www.metService.com/mountain/index>