AVALANCHE PROBLEMS

The main problems highlighted in the forecast

It is essential to know and understand the main avalanche problems on any given day.

DAILY MORNING QUESTIONS

- » Read the latest avalanche forecast for your area: www.avalanches.org
- » What is the main type of avalanche problem today?
- » How big a problem is it – LOW MODERATE CONSIDERABLE HIGH?
- » Where on the mountain will the problem be?
- » What type of terrain should we ski given the problem?



PERSISTENT WEAK LAYER – identify from the forecast. Look for signs of instability – whumps, shooting cracks.
TRAVEL – avoid being on or connected to avalanche terrain. Open slopes over 30° are particularly hazardous. Look for low consequence terrain.



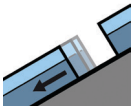
NEW SNOW – soft slab avalanches, new load on the old snow pack.
TRAVEL – wait until new snow stabilises when skiing in avalanche terrain. Be particularly careful on big open slopes and higher consequence terrain



WET SNOW AVALANCHES – warm temperatures and/or rain, particularly rapid warming
TRAVEL – ski earlier in the day when the snow pack is frozen. Once it warms stay away from steep (over 30°) terrain.



WIND DRIFTED SNOW – look for where the snow has been blowing, visually and from avalanche and weather forecasts.
TRAVEL – be careful around ridge lines, particularly lee slopes and gully entrances. Also look out for cornices.



GLIDE AVALANCHES – a failure in the whole snow pack. Slabs glide on smooth bed surface.
TRAVEL – avoid areas close to cracks as failure is difficult to predict.

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