

Avalanche accidents in Italy



Livigno 20 January 2015

Season 2014-2015

winter 2014-2015 italian Alps - summary:

- strong wind for long periods
- below 2000 m: low amount of snow
- above 2000 m: snowfalls on average but irregular snowcover (*eroded/accumulations*)

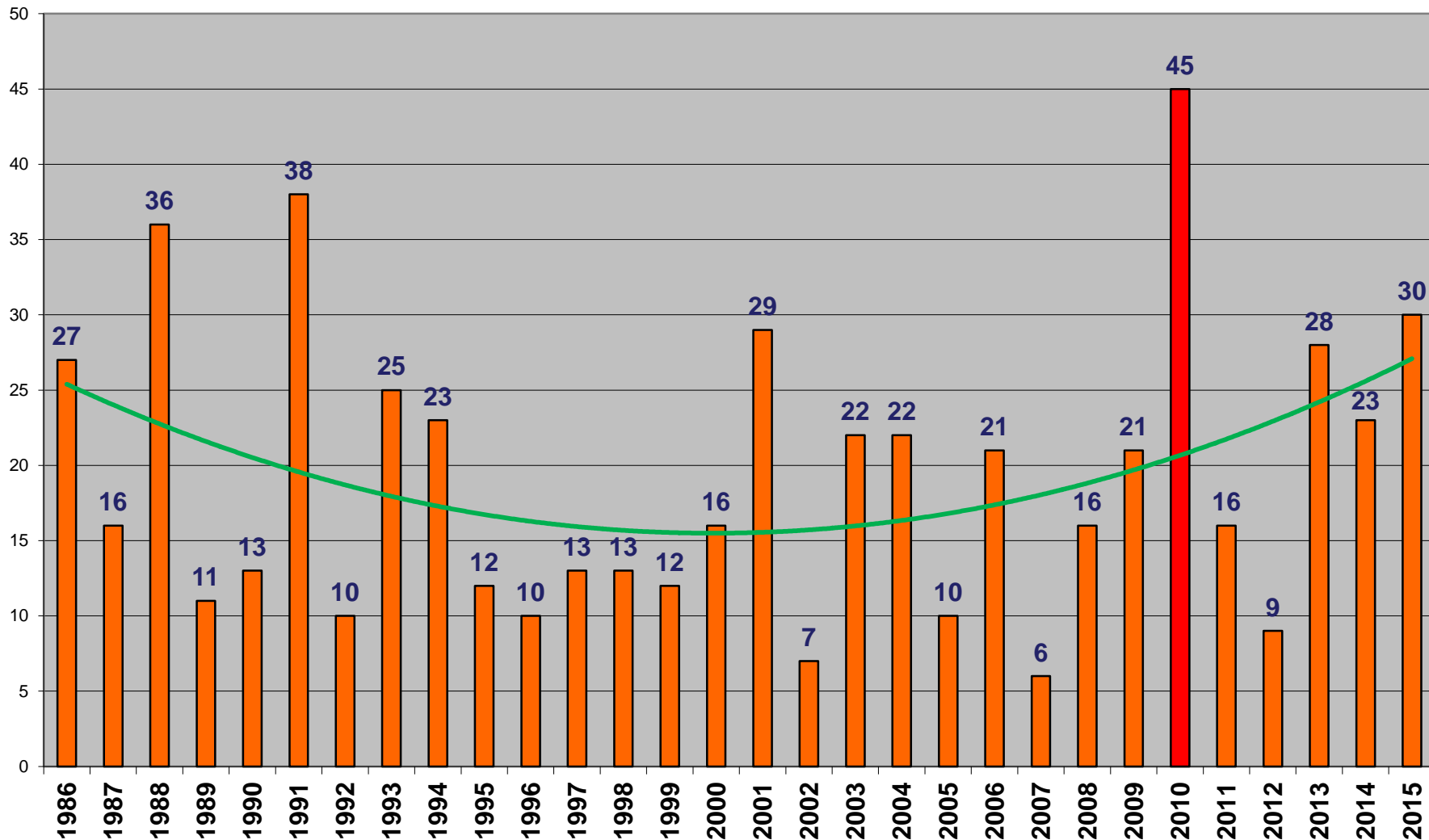


avalanche danger:

- winter not critical for spontaneous avalanches
- very critical for skiers/mountaineers:
 - extraordinarily long period (between January and February) with **deep persistent slab** along all the Alps
 - low probability to trigger but big consequences; hard to communicate effectively to the public (risk to cry “wolf”)

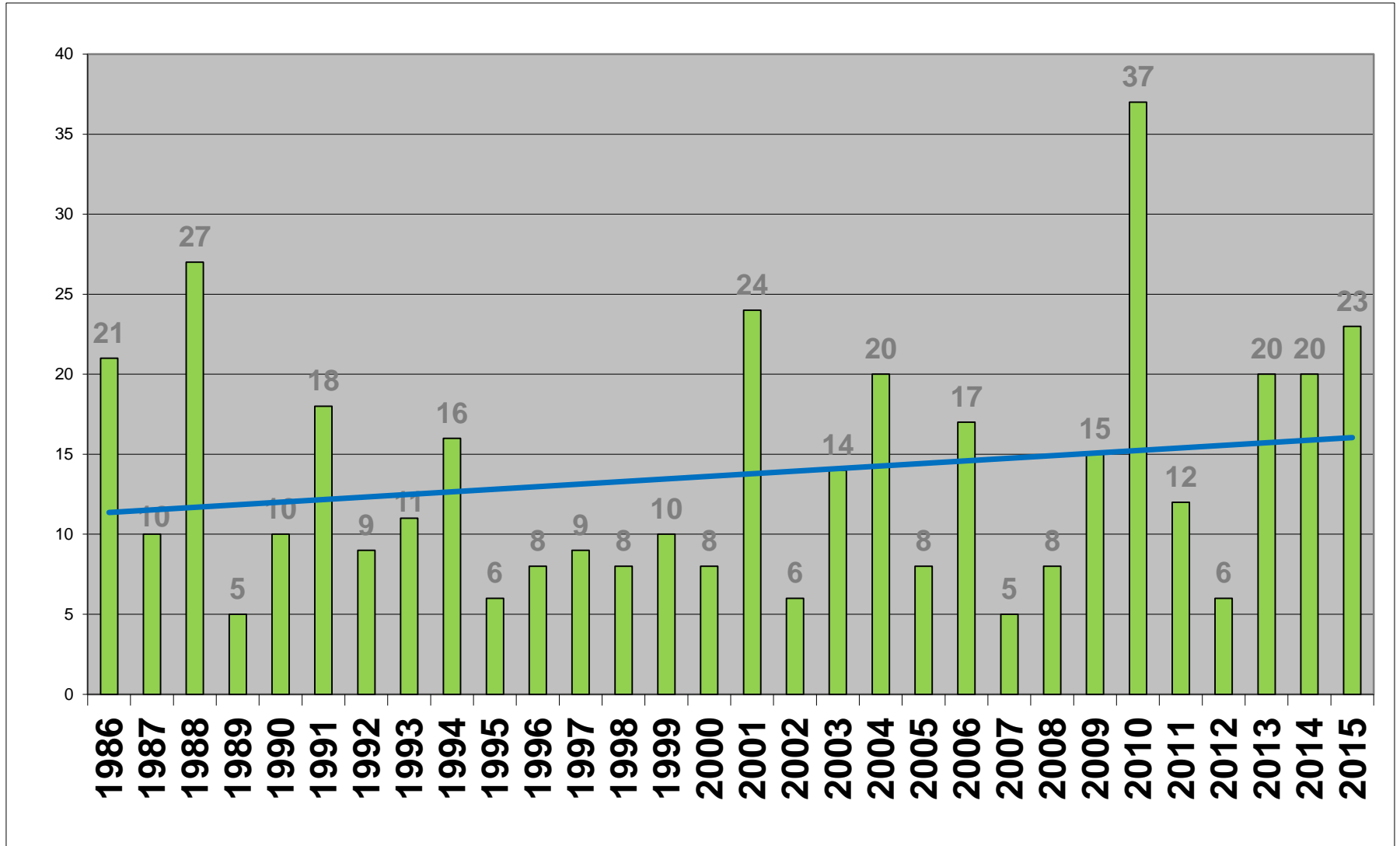
Avalanche victims in Italy 1986-2015

In Italy on average (linear media) 19 persons die every year in avalanche fatalities



Avalanche fatalities in Italy 1986-2015

In Italy on average there are 14 avalanche fatalities each season

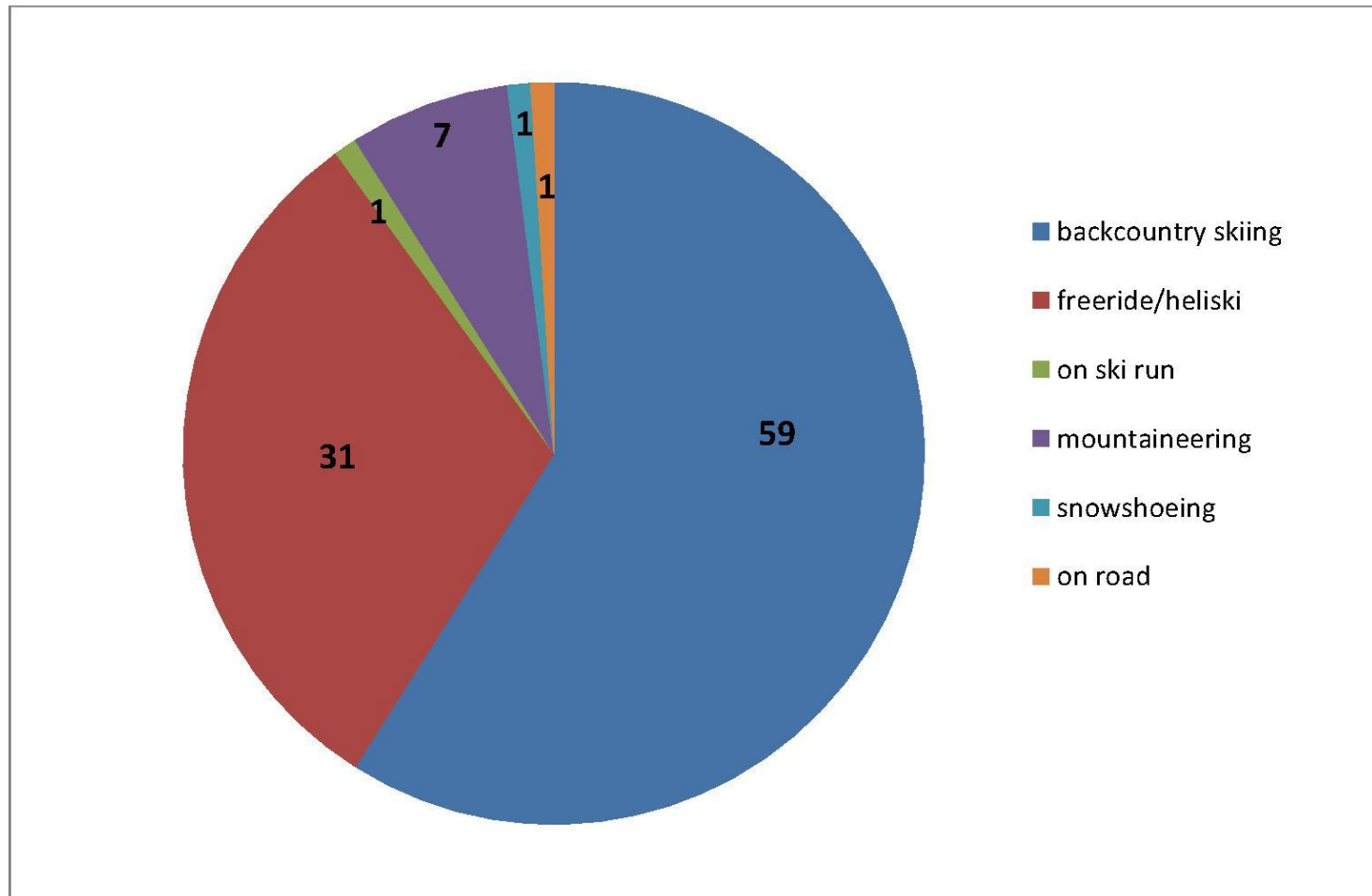




Victims in Italy by Regions season 2014/2015



Avalanche accidents rate by category in Italy 2014-2015



Avalanche victims by category 2014-2015

30 victims:

18 backcountry skiing (10 ascent, 8 descent)

9 off piste skiing/heliskiing

2 mountaineering

1 snowshoeing

Problems highlighted in this season:

- many accidents in which several people were caught at the same time :

3 accidents with 6 persons caught

1 accident with 5 persons caught

5 accidents with 4 people caught

Self rescue inefficient or impossible

Hard work for rescue team

- 4 heliski serious accidents in Aosta valley, Piemonte and Lombardia

with 3 dead and 4 injured

Problems highlighted in this season:

- Several people deployed airbag but totally buried, because:
 - slope too short
 - airbag balloons destroyed or backpack airbag disconnected from the person

2 accidents with people without beacon, shovel and probe:

- 6 local backcountry skiers caught: 1 without beacon
- Swiss family snowshoeing, all without beacon: 1 caught and dead;

Mont Blanc – Aiguilles Marbrées

Giant's tooth

23 January 2015

45°

ski tracks →

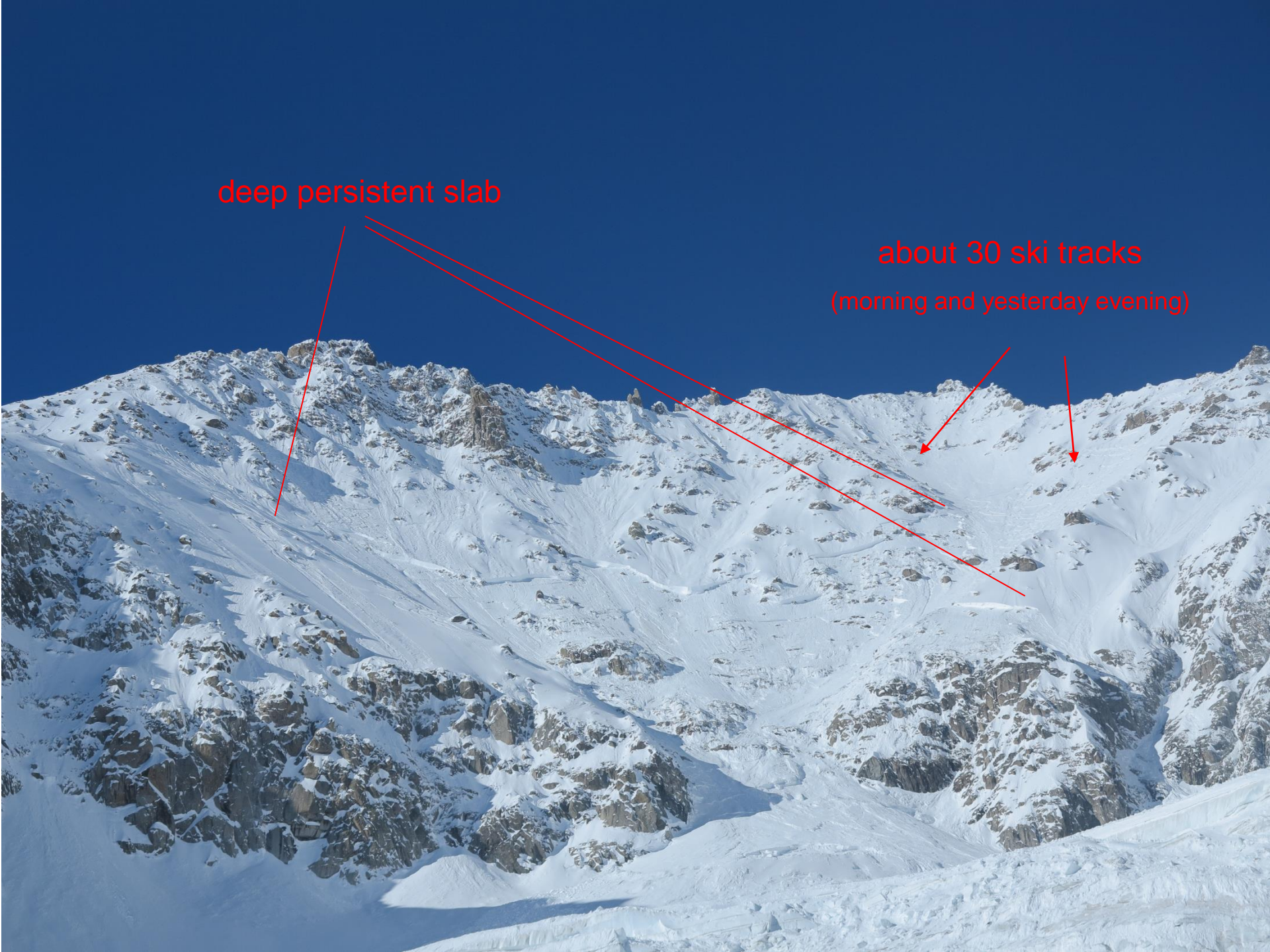
40°





deep persistent slab

about 30 ski tracks
(morning and yesterday evening)





**airbag broken found
100 m further down
of the skier buried**

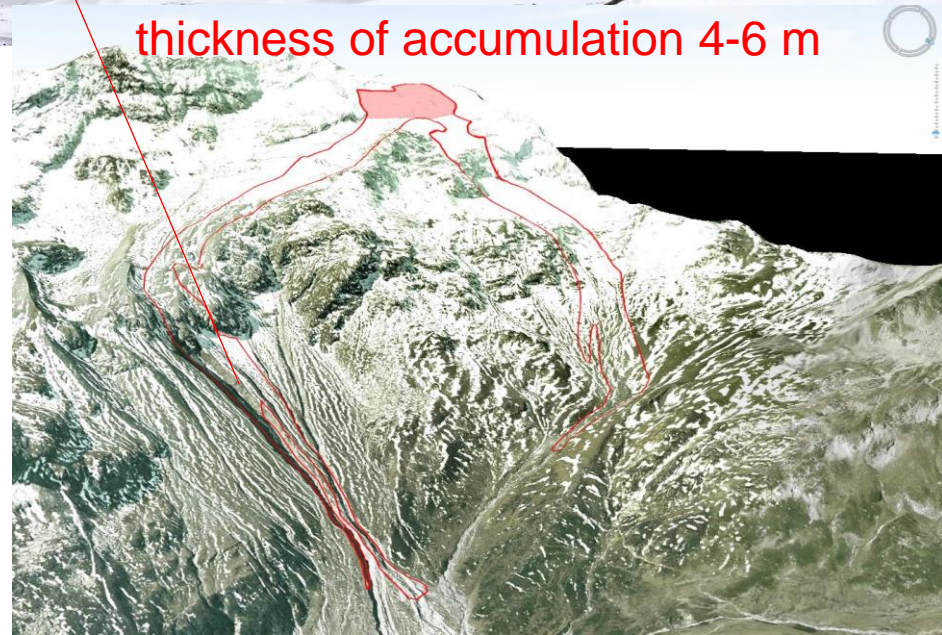
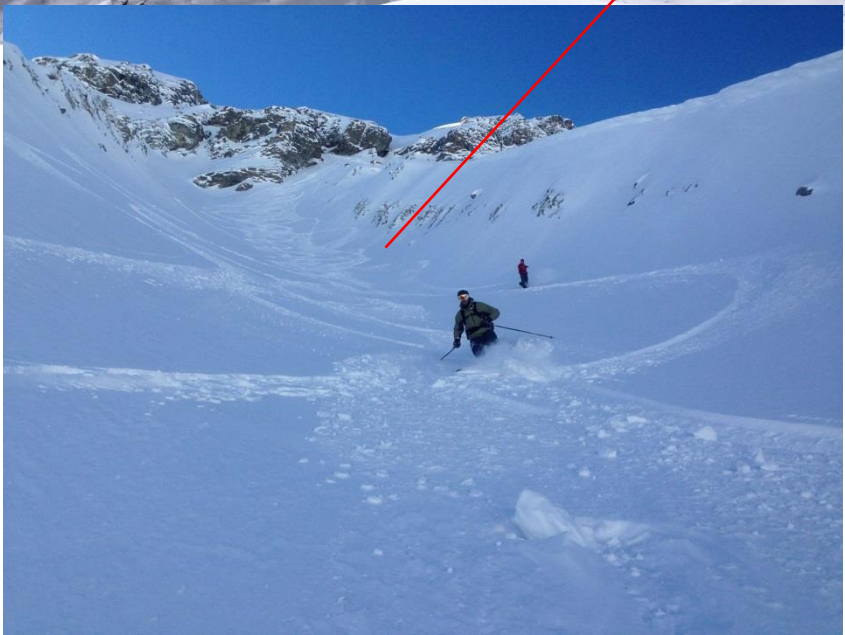
8 February 2015

helicopter crashed



avalanche length max 2300 m

thickness of accumulation 4-6 m



Mont Blanc



strong wind during landing

1 USA skier caught: deploy airbag, partially buried, uninjured.

1 USA snowboarder caught: airbag not deployed, totally buried, injured

Companion rescue (USA and FR mountain guides)



deep persistent slab



Helicopter crashed

Aosta valley – Testa dei Fra 18 January 2015





deep persistent slab + terrain trap =
depth buried 7 m

Rescue:

10 companions + 22 rescuers

Rescue helicopter arrived after 10'.

buried extracted dead after 1h50'



Schneespitze accident – 06 January 2015



more than 35 people on the track

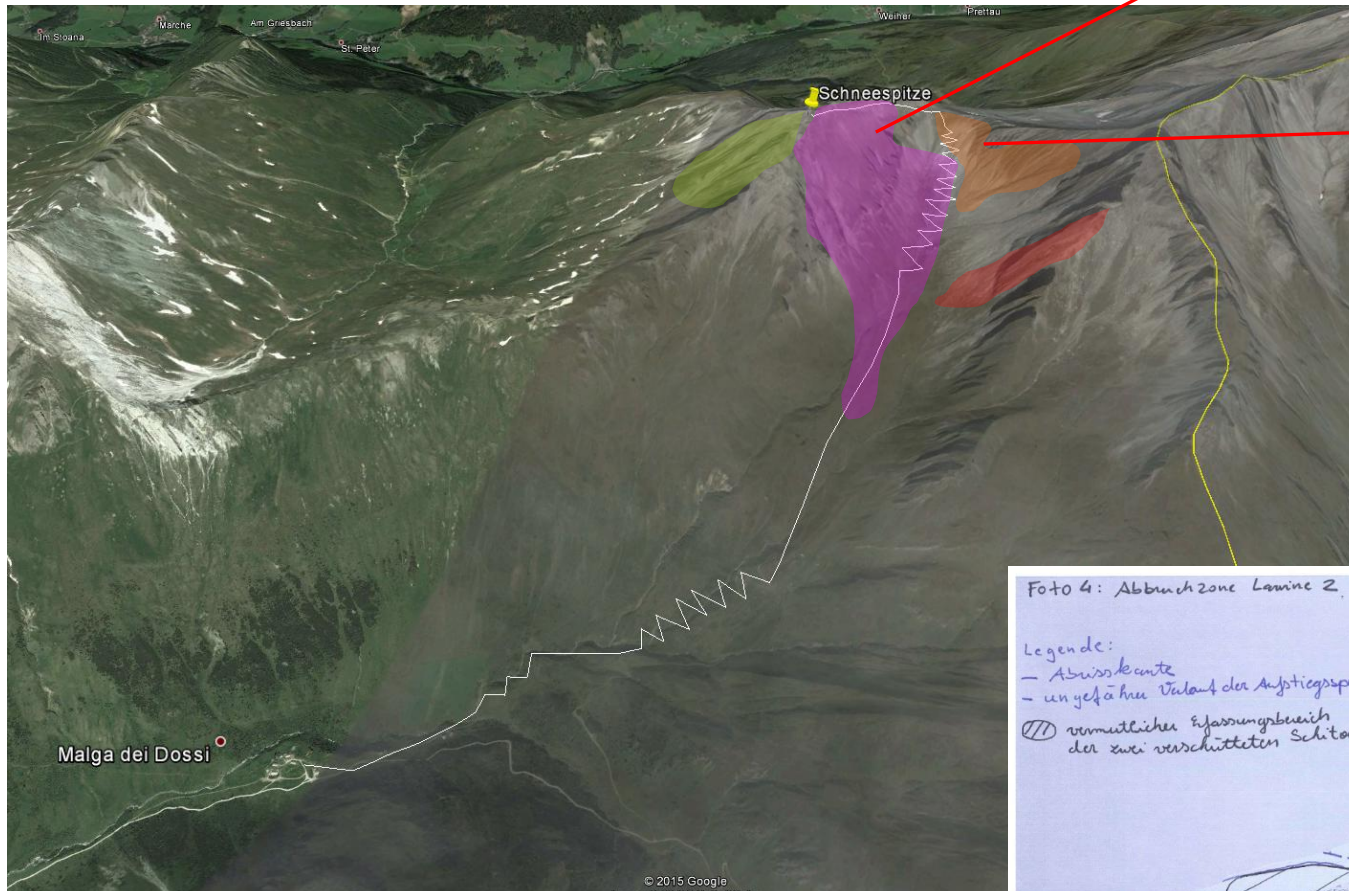


hard wind accumulation

before the avalanche...

Schneespitze accident – 06 January 2015

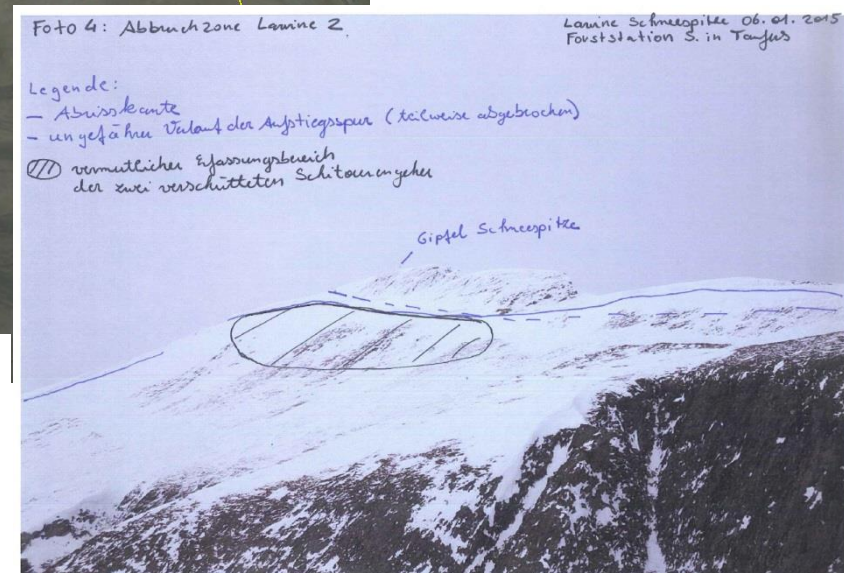
6 local skiers caught, 2 buried and dead (1 without beacon)



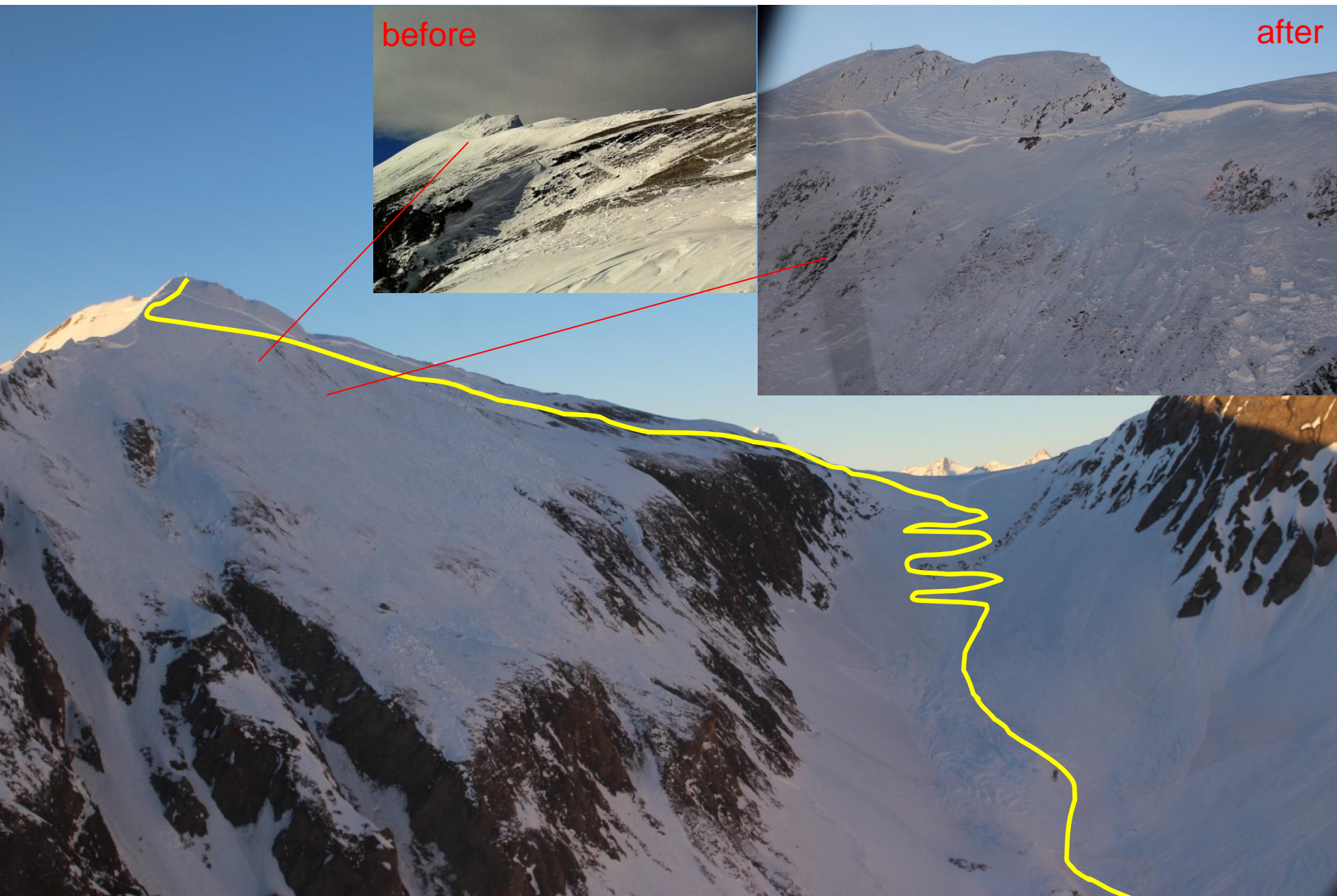
Secondary avalanche

3 people sitting in a pass: 2 caught and buried. Successful companions rescue

A lot of people in the area: big rescue operation with some helicopters and more than 100 rescuers.



Schneespitze accident – 06 January 2015



ACCIDENT TERRA NERA – 27 MARCH 2015

Piedmont Region Susa valley:

15 heliskiers start h 10.00

Conditions: t -8°C; wind moderate

25-30 cm of fresh snow in the last 3 days

3 skiers caught: 2 dead and 1 injured

1 skier open airbag but balloons exploded during the slide (600 vertical meters)



Pila 9 February 2015

for further informations: aineva@aineva.it