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National avalanche bulletin no. 142

for Saturday, 29 March 2008

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On northern Alpine Ridge, considerable avalanche danger

Current conditions

On Thursday night, about 10 cm of snow fell widespread. During the day on Friday it was predominantly sunny. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 3 degrees. Light to moderate southerly winds prevailed. Particularly in those regions with lots of snow on the northern flank of the Alps, the snow has settled and consolidated measurably. On very steep south facing slopes, the snow surface has become moist up to high altitudes. Elsewhere the snow on the surface is dry and loosely packed or consolidated by the wind. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, the snowpack is only moderately well consolidated, particularly on north facing slopes above the treeline. Beneath the new snow and the layers of snowdrift of the most recent period of precipitation there are older, soft layers in places. Avalanches can fracture down to these layers and in some places even down to the ground.

Short-term development

On Friday night strong westerly winds will prevail temporarily and fresh snowdrift accumulations will form. Only small amounts of snowfall are expected. During the day on Saturday it will be generally sunny amid light to moderate southwesterly winds. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be between minus 4 degrees in northern regions and zero degrees in southern regions.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found in northwest to north to south facing snowdrift-filled gullies and bowls above approximately 2500 m in particular. The fresh snowdrift accumulations are easily triggered and should be avoided.

Remaining regions of the Swiss Alps not including central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects. On the remaining northern flank of the Alps, they are found above approximately 1800 m; in the other parts of Valais, in southern Urseren, in northern Ticino as well as in the rest of Grisons above approximately 2000. It is possible to trigger a slab avalanche primarily by large additional loading in areas with shallow snow, for example in sharp bends or kinks in the terrain. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, avalanches can fracture down to the old snowpack. In addition, the fresh snowdrift accumulations should be avoided.

Central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri:

Low avalanche danger (Level 1)

Isolated avalanche prone locations can still be found in extremely steep terrain.

In all regions in the course of the day on steep, sun-flooded slopes below about 2200 m, isolated wet avalanches are possible. At high altitudes, moist, small snowslides can be released from sunny, rocky starting zones.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On Sunday it will initially be sunny, then the cloudiness will increase from the west and south. In eastern regions it will remain quite sunny, under the influence of foehn winds. On Monday it will be overcast and precipitation is expected. The avalanche danger on Sunday is subject to a daytime warming curve. On Monday the avalanche danger will increase regionally.

Additional information: 'Fax-on-demand' (CHF 1.49/min)
0900 59 2020 List of fax aids SLF
0900 59 2025 Snow Depths Map (in case of major change)
0900 59 2026 New Snow Map daily

Weather Information in collaboration with MeteoSwiss
0900 162 138 / 338 Alpine Weather Report MeteoSwiss phone/fax (phone: CHF 1.20/min) (fax: CHF 2.--/min)

Regional avalanche bulletins (CHF 1.49/min)
0900 59 20 31 Central Switzerland
0900 59 20 32 Lower Valais / VD
0900 59 20 33 Upper Valais
0900 59 20 34 North and Central Grisons
0900 59 20 35 South Grisons
0900 59 20 36 Bernese Oberland
0900 59 20 37 Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

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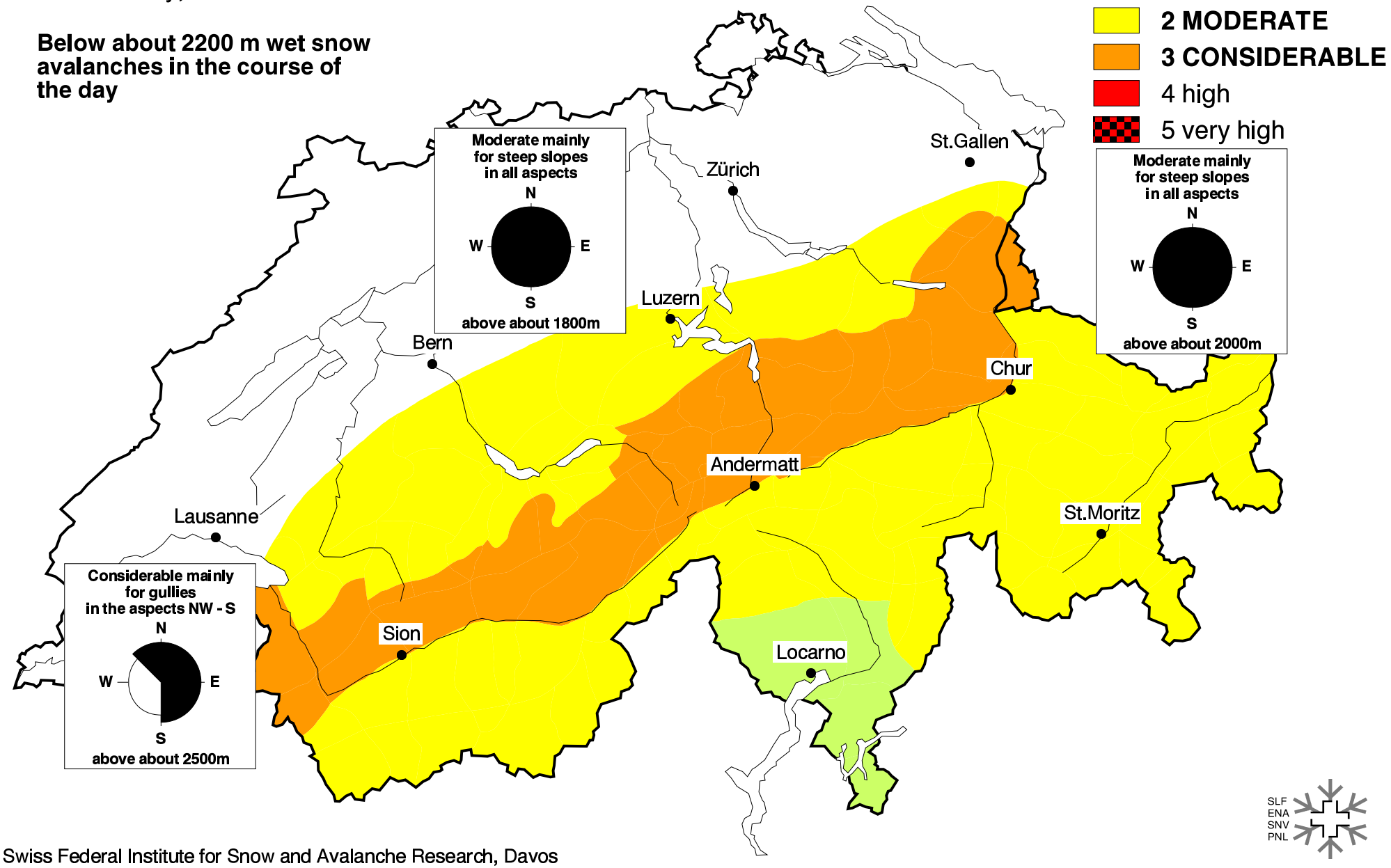
Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 29. March 2008

Below about 2200 m wet snow avalanches in the course of the day



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