Eidgenössisches Institut für Schnee- und Lawinenforschung
Institut Fédéral pour l'Etude de la Neige et des Avalanches
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National avalanche bulletin no. 177

for Saturday, 3 May 2008

issue date 2.5.2008, 18:30 hours

Predominantly favourable backcountry touring conditions during the morning hours

Current conditions

On Thursday night it was partly overcast in northern regions, generally clear in southern regions. During the day on Friday it was predominantly sunny in southern regions, variably cloudy in the northern regions. The least amount of sunshine was seen in the northeast. Midday temperatures at 2000 m were plus 2 degrees in western and southern regions, zero degrees in eastern regions. Light westerly winds prevailed, at higher altitudes the winds were of moderate strength in places.
In zones above approximately 2800 m, the snowpack on north facing slopes is still wintery dry. The entire snowpack is soft, thoroughly wet and prone to triggering on south facing slopes below about 2800 m, on north facing slopes below about 2400 m. It can stabilise somewhat during the night through the freezing of its uppermost layers. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, the snowpack fundament is weak widespread.

Short-term development

On Friday night it will be generally clear. During the day on Saturday it will be predominantly sunny. In the course of the day, cumulonimbus clouds will build up. Light to moderate northwesterly winds will prevail. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be plus 4 degrees in western and southern regions, plus 2 degrees in eastern regions. Through the daytime warming cycle and solar radiation, the snowpack surface crust will soften noticeably and lose its firmness.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge; Main Alpine Ridge; Valais; Grisons:

Moderate danger of dry avalanches (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on northwest to north to northeast facing steep slopes above approximately 3000 m in particular. Especially the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered as slab avalanches. These snowdrift accumulations are to be found particularly in areas adjacent to ridge lines and should be assessed critically.

Remaining regions of the Swiss Alps:

Low danger of dry avalanches (Level 1)

Isolated avalanche prone locations are to be found on extremely steep, north facing slopes.

The danger of wet snow avalanches is subject to a well pronounced daytime cycle. Through the thawing of the melt-freeze crust, which is capable of bearing loads, the danger level will rapidly rise to "considerable" (Level 3). Below about 2800 m, wet snow avalanches can be expected in all aspects. Isolated large sized wet snow avalanches which can fracture the entire snowpack down to the ground are also possible. This is particularly the case in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons. Backcountry touring and ascents to huts should be completed sufficiently early.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

Both days will be quite sunny and mild. In the latter part of both days, cumulonimbus clouds will build up. The nights will be predominantly clear with good outgoing radiation. The danger of dry avalanches will diminish. Favourable backcountry touring conditions will prevail during the morning hours. The danger level of wet snow avalanches will be subject to a distinctive daytime cycle.

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)
-- Central Switzerland
-- Lower Valais / VD
-- Upper Valais
-- North and Central Grisons
-- South Grisons
-- Bernese Oberland
-- Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

Internet: http://www.slf.ch
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Email: lwp@slf.ch
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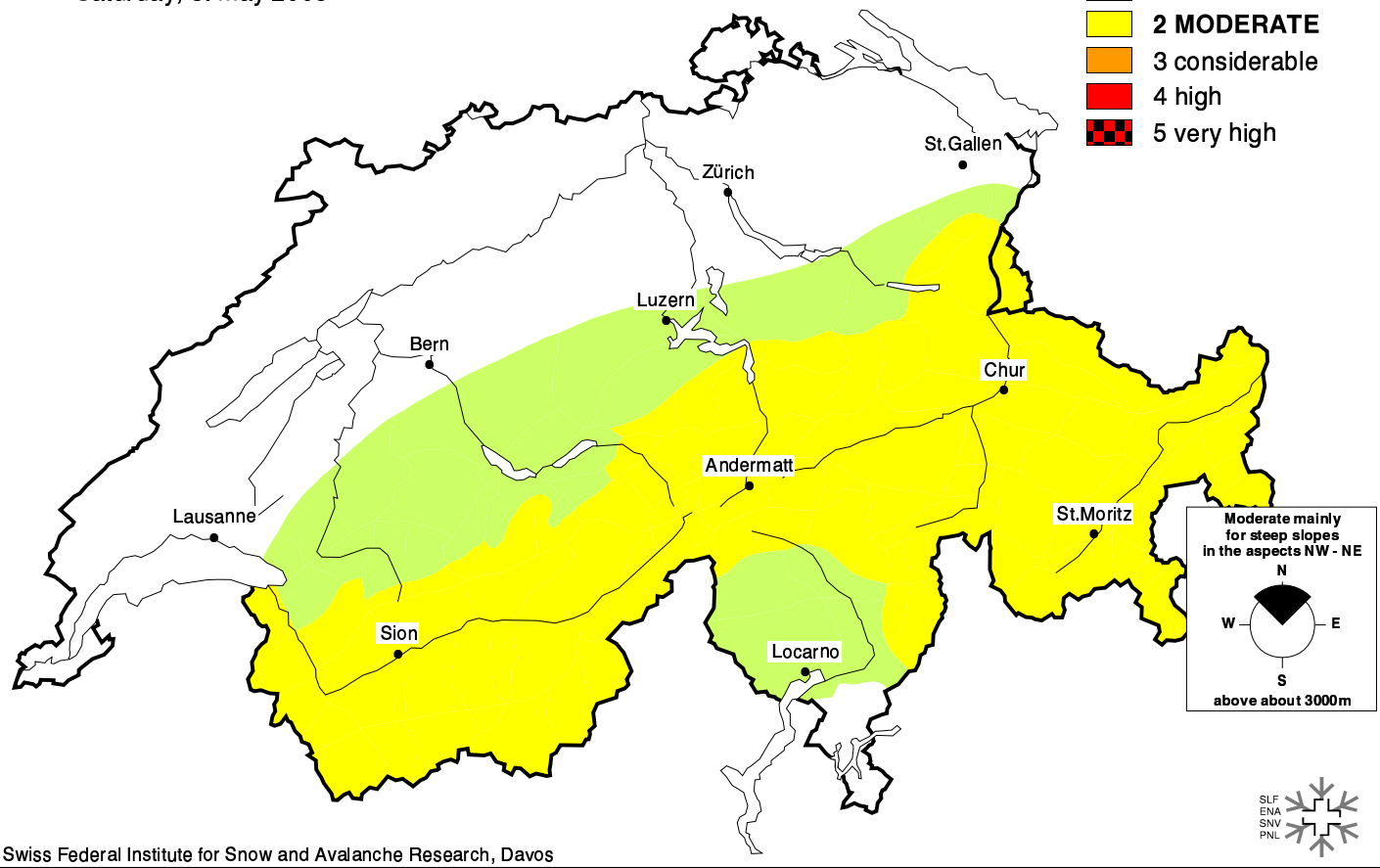
Danger forecast for dry snow avalanches

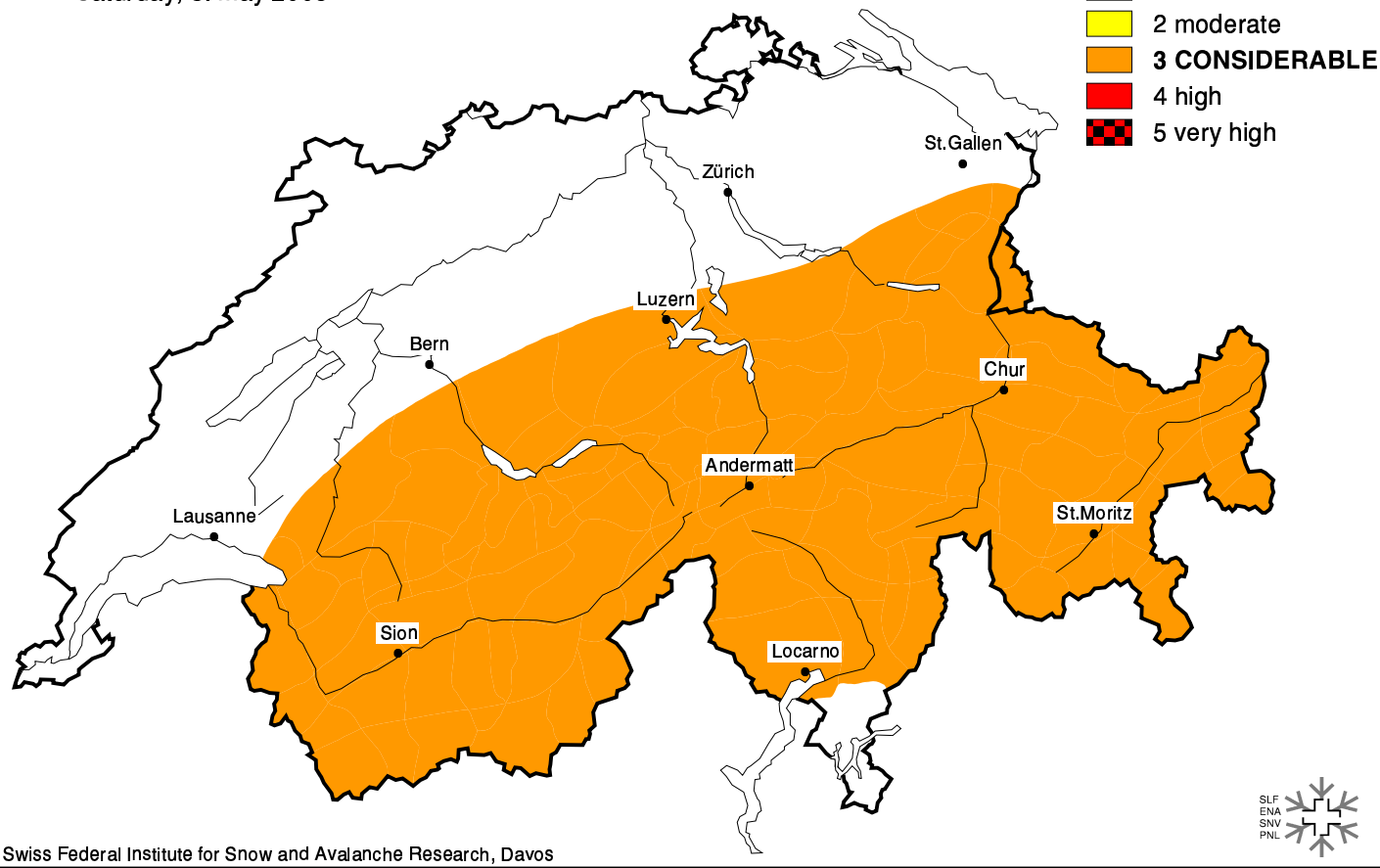
for Saturday, 3. May 2008



Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research, Davos

Danger for wet snow avalanches in the course of the day

for Saturday, 3. May 2008



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