

National avalanche bulletin no. 40

for Sunday, 14 December 2008

issue date 13.12.2008, 18:30 hours

A treacherous avalanche situation, amid snowfall in southern regions and storm winds

Current conditions

On Saturday it was quite sunny in western regions. In eastern regions and in the Upper Valais there were bright spells. Along the southern flank of the Alps from Friday to Saturday evening there was 10 to 20 cm of new snow. Moderate southerly winds prevailed and further increased in strength towards evening. Midday temperatures at 2000 m were between minus 1 degree in northern regions and minus 5 degrees in southern regions.

Southerly winds have given rise to new snowdrift accumulations which are prone to triggering. To begin with, the snowdrift masses were still small in size. In western regions, in central Grisons and in the Lower Engadine in particular, thin layers of new snow provide blanket cover to an old snowpack which is quite weak in places.

Short-term development

On Sunday, some bright spells caused by the foehn are expected in eastern regions, in isolated cases in western regions. In the Engadine intermittent snowfall is anticipated. On the southern flank of the Alps snowfall is expected which will be heavy in places. By Sunday evening along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Matterhorn into Goms, 30 to 50 cm of new snow is expected. In the remaining western parts of the Main Alpine Ridge, in the remaining Upper Valais, in the Bedrettal and in the Maggia valleys, about 20 to 30 cm of snowfall is anticipated. On the remaining southern flank of the Alps and in the Gotthard region, 10 to 20 cm of snow is expected, in the remaining northern regions only a few centimeters. Wind strength will again increase: strong to stormy southeasterly winds are expected. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be minus 4 degrees in northern regions and minus 6 degrees in southern regions. In the major areas of precipitation, large sized snowdrift accumulations are expected to form. Even in the other regions, both new snow and old snowpack will be transported. The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are unstable.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the southern Upper Valais, in Goms, in the Bedrettal and in the Maggia valleys, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. The avalanche danger is expected to increase significantly in the course of the day. Increasingly frequent natural avalanches are expected. In the indicated regions of the Upper Valais in particular, these can in isolated cases penetrate all the way down to valley areas and put exposed parts of transportation routes at risk.

In the remaining parts of the Valais, in Urseren, in the remaining Ticino, in central Grisons, in the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can easily be triggered as avalanches. Natural avalanches of small and medium size are possible in isolated cases. In central Valais, in central Grisons and in Lower Engadine in particular, avalanches can even fracture down to the lowermost layers of the old snowpack.

In the remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps and in northern Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on west to north to east facing wind loaded slopes above approximately 1800 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered as avalanches even by a single backcountry skier or freerider.

Particularly on steep grassy hillsides in the regions with lots of snow, full depth snowslides continue to be expected.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Sunday night the snowfall is expected to continue in southern regions, most heavily in the valleys of Visp, in the Simplon region and in the western part of Ticino. In the course of the day on Monday, snowfall and winds will slacken off. In northern regions it will be variably cloudy. On Tuesday it will be partially overcast and dry. On Monday the avalanche danger will continue to escalate in southern regions in particular. On Tuesday, the danger will gradually recede.

National avalanche bulletin as an MMS (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

Send an SMS with the corresponding key word to the speed dial number 162.

LAWINE overview of the keywords

LAWCHD national avalanche bulletin (german)

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 (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

LAWZCH Central Switzerland

LAWBVS Lower Valais / VD

LAWOVS Upper Valais

LAWNGR North and Central Grisons

LAWSGR South Grisons

LAWBEO Bernese Oberland

LAWEAN Eastern Part of the Northern Slope of the Alps

Internet: <http://www.slf.ch>

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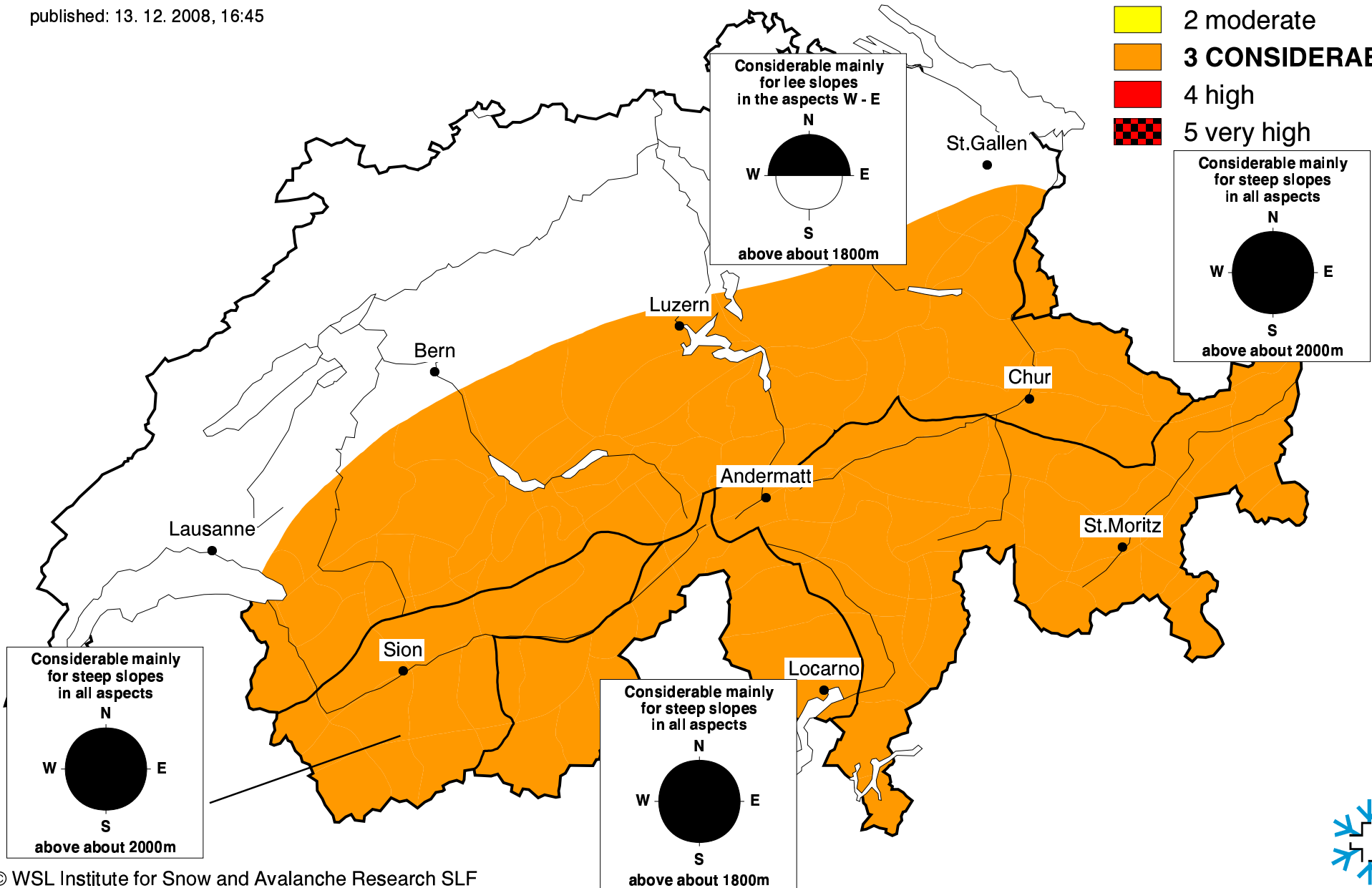
Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 14. December 2008

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Danger level

-  1 low
-  2 moderate
-  **3 CONSIDERABLE**
-  4 high
-  5 very high








Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 14. December 2008

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Danger level

-  1 low
-  2 moderate
-  **3 CONSIDERABLE**
-  4 high
-  5 very high

