

National avalanche bulletin no. 47

for Sunday, 21 December 2008

issue date 20.12.2008, 18:30 hours

Considerable avalanche danger widespread

Current conditions

On Saturday in southern Upper Valais and along the southern flank of the Alps it was predominantly sunny. In the remaining regions it was generally overcast. On the northern flank of the Alps, particularly in its central and eastern sectors and in northern Grisons, there was ongoing snowfall. The amounts of new snow since Friday in St. Gallen Oberland and in Prättigau amount to 25 to 40 cm. In the bordering regions of the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps and in the bordering regions of Grisons, there was 15 to 25 cm of new snow. Further to the west and to the south there was less than 15 cm of snowfall. Moderate northwesterly winds prevailed, in high alpine regions the winds were strong. At midday, the temperatures at 2000 m were minus 2 degrees in northern regions and plus 2 degrees in southern regions.

In high alpine regions, the snowpack has been intensely subject to wind influences. In the inneralpine regions of Grisons, the new snow is falling onto an old snowpack which still evidences weak layers in places.

Short-term development

On Sunday in southern regions, it is expected to be sunny far and wide. In the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Grisons and also in northern Lower Engadine, 20 to 40 cm of new snow is expected. To the west and to the south thereof, less snowfall is anticipated. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 2 degrees. Moderate northerly winds will prevail at intermediate altitudes, at higher altitudes the winds are expected to be strong to stormy.

The new snow in regions with heavy precipitation will be intensively transported at high altitudes. At intermediate altitudes and in lower lying areas, increasingly frequent full depth snowslides are again expected.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Northern flank of the Alps excluding Vaud and Fribourg Alps and the western and central Prealps; in addition, Valais not including western Lower Valais; northern Ticino; Grisons not including southern valleys of Grisons:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the central sector of the northern flank of the Alps not including the Prealps, in the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Grisons, in the Silvretta region and in Samnaun, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. In the remaining regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 2200 m in particular. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider, by and large. Particularly in the eastern sector of the northern flank of the Alps and from Prättigau into Samnaun, natural avalanches as well can be expected at higher altitudes. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards, and particularly in the highly critical assessment of snowdrift accumulations, is imperative.

Western and central Prealps; Vaud and Fribourg Alps; western Lower Valais; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri; southern valleys of Grisons:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 1800 m. Prudent route selection is of great importance. Snowdrift accumulations should be avoided whenever possible.

In all regions, particularly at intermediate altitudes, increasingly frequent full depth snowslides can be expected. Snowpack fissures, that are glide cracks, are indicators of these danger spots. In southern regions, furthermore, wet sluffs will be possible in the course of the day.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Sunday night, the strong winds and even the snowfall are expected to taper off in northern regions. During the day on Monday, it will turn increasingly sunny in northern regions as well. On Tuesday, predominantly sunny weather is expected in all regions. The danger of dry avalanches will recede incrementally. The hazards of full depth snowslides will persist.

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)

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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






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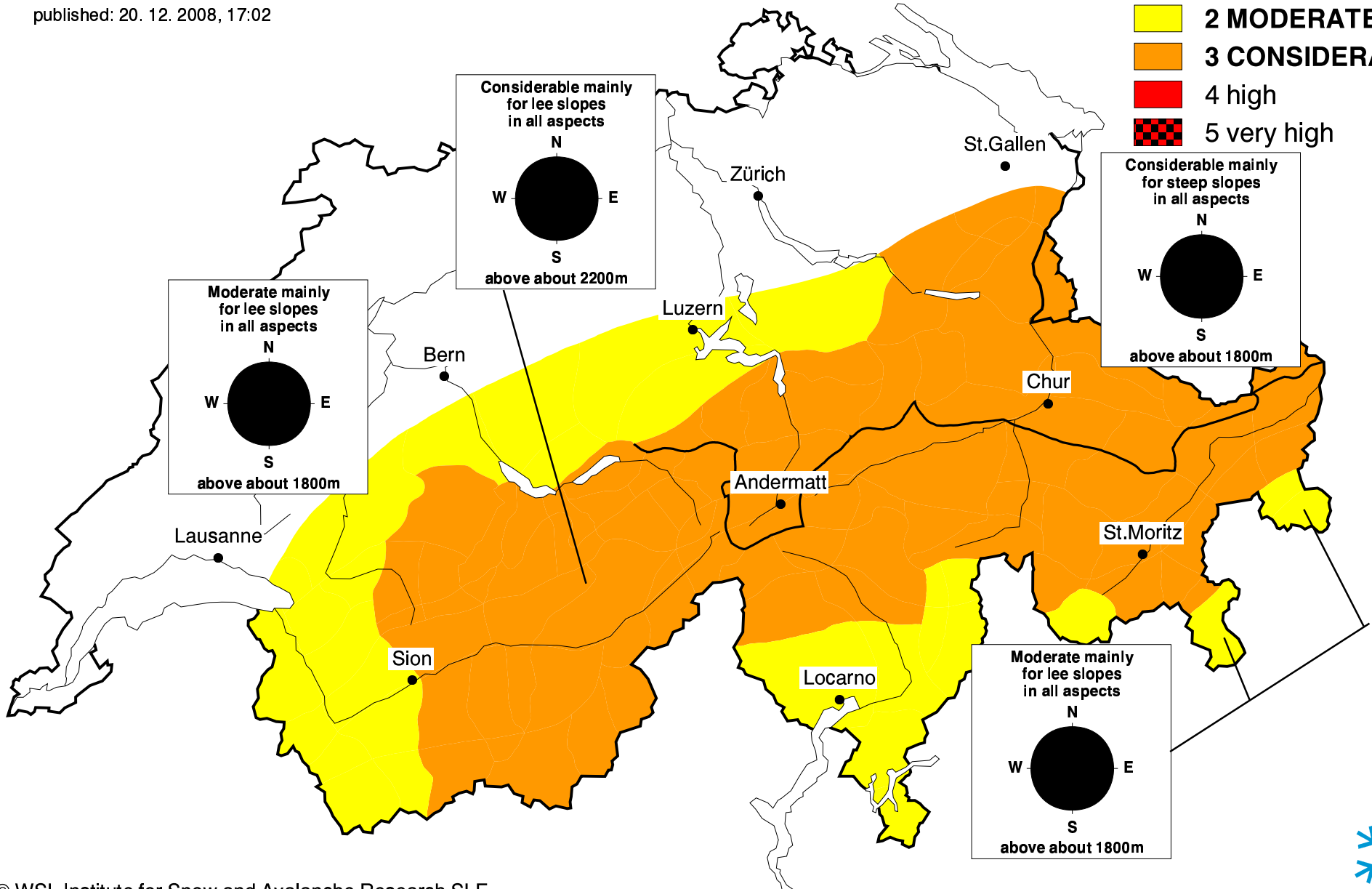
Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 21. December 2008

published: 20. 12. 2008, 17:02

Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 21. December 2008

published: 21. 12. 2008, 08:12

Danger level

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

