

National avalanche bulletin no. 77

for Tuesday, 20 January 2009

issue date 19.1.2009, 18:30 hours

Further snowfall and critical avalanche situation

Current conditions

Monday was very cloudy. Since Sunday morning, about 30 cm of snow has fallen above approximately 1500 m in northern Lower Valais and the Gotthard region; 10 to 20 cm has fallen over a wide area elsewhere. In southern Valais, Ticino and Grisons, less than 10 cm of snow has fallen. The southwesterly wind was strong and very gusty. Midday temperatures at 2000 m were between 0 degrees in the north and minus 4 degrees in the south. The fresh snow and, in some cases, loosely bonded old snow have been transported. Especially in places that are protected from the wind and shady, the fresh snow and snow drift accumulations are lying on loosely bonded, faceted old snow. On the northern flank of the Alps and in the inneralpine regions of Valais and Grisons, the snowpack is loosely packed down to the full depth in some places.

Short-term development

By Tuesday evening, 30 to 50 cm of snow will fall in the Grisons southern valleys and Upper Engadine. In the other regions, 15 to 30 cm of snow fall; a little less will fall in Upper Valais and the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps. In all regions, the snowfall level is dropping to low altitudes. At high altitude, the southwesterly to southerly wind will be very strong during the night. In the east, the wind will remain strong during the day. It will ease in the west and, at intermediate altitudes, change direction to northeasterly. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be about minus 7 degrees in the north and minus 4 degrees in the south. The fresh snow and wind will give rise to snow drift accumulations, which will be large in the regions exposed to heavier precipitation. Fresh snow and snow drift accumulations generally bond poorly with the old snowpack, so that the likelihood of avalanche triggering is high.

Avalanche danger forecast for Tuesday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

Considerable avalanche danger (level 3)

In Schams, Oberhalbstein and Upper Engadine, on the main Alpine ridge from the Rheinwaldhorn to Lower Engadine, and in the Grisons southern valleys, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1600 m. Natural avalanches are expected, some of which can reach medium size. Critical conditions prevail for snow sport participants venturing off piste.

In the remaining areas subject to this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1800 m. Avalanches can easily be released by a single winter sport participant in these regions as well. Natural avalanches are possible. The still unstable snow drift accumulations will be covered with loosely bonded fresh snow and difficult to recognise. For those venturing off piste, experience in the assessment of the avalanche situation and caution are required.

Trend for Wednesday and Thursday

On Wednesday there will be some bright spells in the west. Elsewhere it will be very cloudy and a little further snow will fall. On Thursday, the weather will be sunny at times in all regions. The bonding between the fresh snow and the old snowpack will improve only very slowly. The avalanche danger will therefore decrease only slowly.

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>

WAP: wap.slf.ch

Teletext: Page 782 (SF DRS)

Phone: 187 (Fr. 0.50/call and min)

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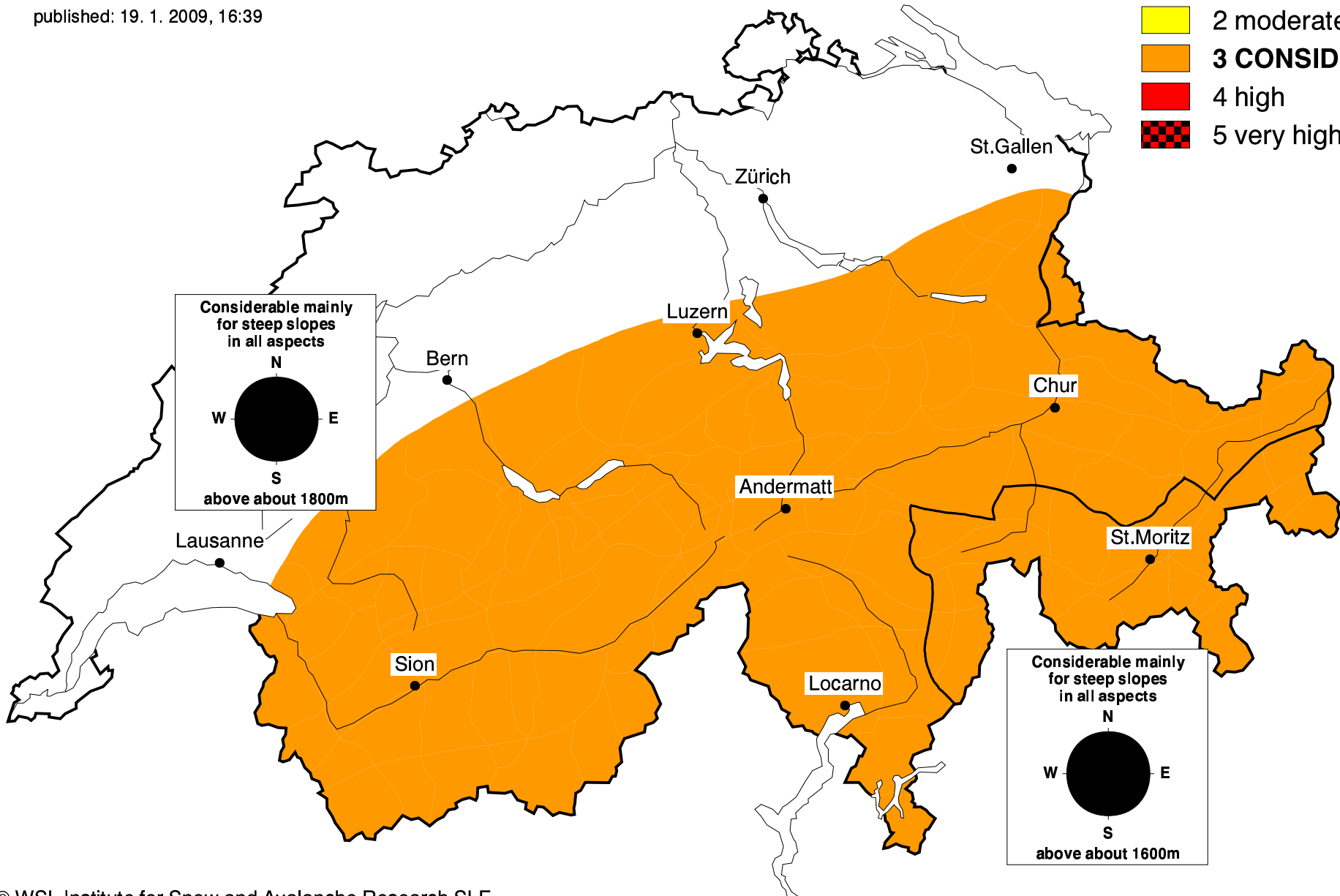
Avalanche danger forecast

for Tuesday, 20. January 2009

published: 19. 1. 2009, 16:39

Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Tuesday, 20. January 2009

published: 20. 1. 2009, 07:43

Danger level

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

