

## National avalanche bulletin no. 78

for Wednesday, 21 January 2009

issue date 20.1.2009, 18:30 hours

### *Critical avalanche situation for those engaging in winter sports*

#### Current conditions

On Tuesday, 30 to 50 cm of snow fell in the Vaud and Fribourg Alps, western and northern Lower Valais, the Grisons southern valleys, Upper Engadine and the adjacent regions. 20 to 30 cm of snow fell over a wide area elsewhere, but smaller quantities fell in southern Upper Valais and western Ticino. In the north the snowfall level fell to below 1000 m, and in the south snow fell even in the valley bottom. The midday temperature at 2000 m was about minus 4 degrees. The southerly to southwesterly wind was strong in the night before easing initially in the west and then in the east as well during the day.

The snow drift accumulations have been covered with loosely bonded fresh snow and are barely recognisable. 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. In areas close to the tree line, moreover, surface hoar is covered with snow in some localities. The bonding between the fresh snow and the old snowpack is often very poor. This is reflected in the large number of natural avalanches and, in some cases, the successful release of avalanches with explosives. 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, and avalanches can penetrate deep layers.

#### Short-term development

On Wednesday the weather will be fairly sunny in the west, but very cloudy in the other regions. In the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps and Grisons in particular, a little snow will fall even at low altitudes. The wind will be light to moderate, largely from the west. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be about minus 8 degrees in the north and minus 6 degrees in the south.

The loose fresh snow is gradually bonding and becoming more capable of transmitting stresses. Because the bonding with the old snowpack is barely improving, the avalanche danger is more likely to increase than decrease in many places on Wednesday.

#### Avalanche danger forecast for Wednesday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

##### *Considerable avalanche danger (level 3)*

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1600 m. Isolated natural avalanches can still occur. Avalanches can be triggered easily, even by small additional loads. In the Vaud and Fribourg Alps, northern and western Lower Valais, Engadine and the adjacent regions to the north, and in the Grisons southern valleys, the situation remains especially critically for those engaging in winter sports. For those venturing off piste, a lot of experience in the assessment of the avalanche situation and caution are required.

#### Trend for Thursday and Friday

Thursday will be partly sunny. On Friday it will be very cloudy, and snow will fall in the west in particular. The westerly wind will be strong. The avalanche danger will decrease slowly initially, before increasing again on Friday in the west in particular.

##### 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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**Teletext:** Page 782 (SF DRS)

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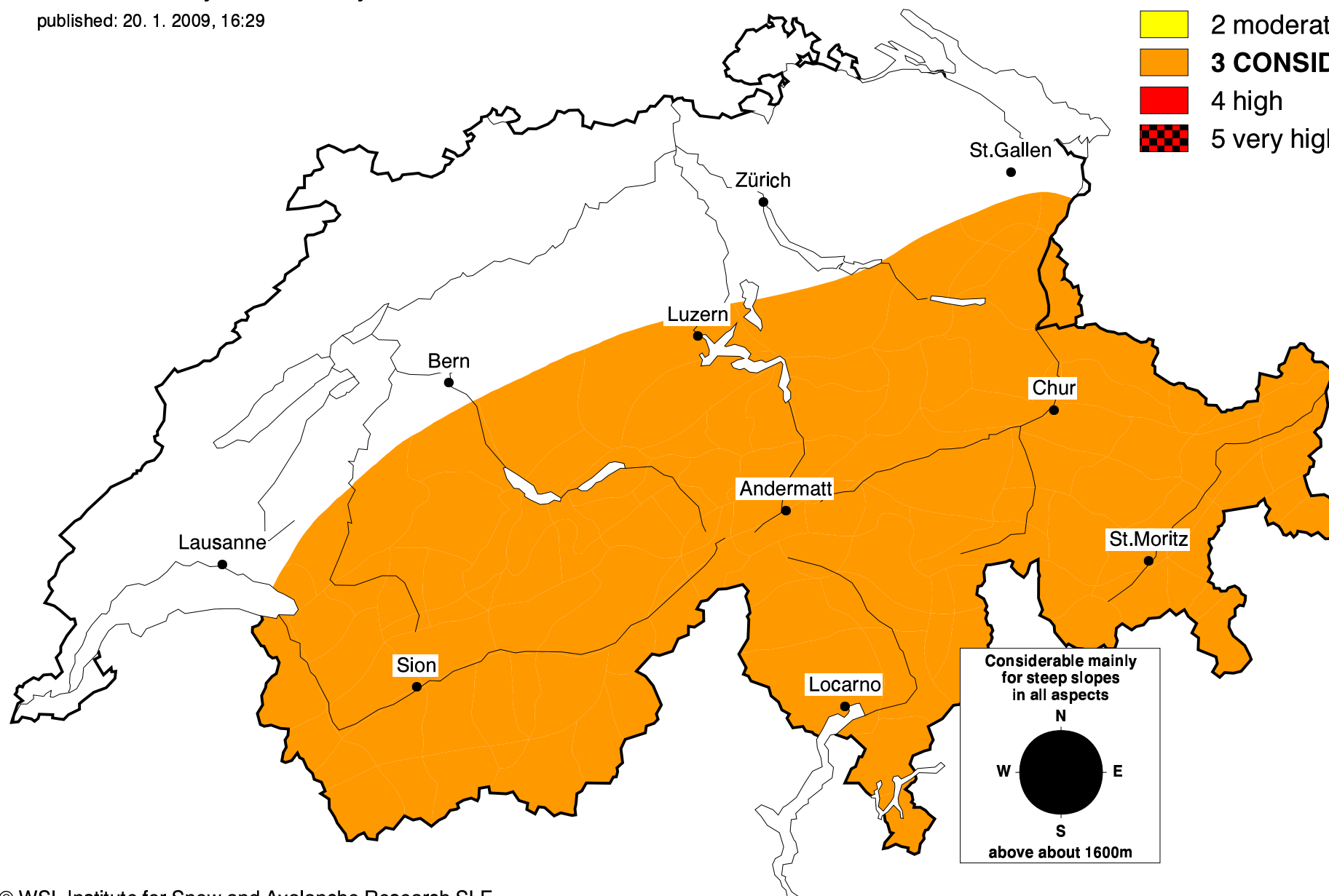
# Avalanche danger forecast

for Wednesday, 21. January 2009

published: 20. 1. 2009, 16:29

Danger level

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








# Avalanche danger forecast

for Wednesday, 21. January 2009

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Danger level

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

