

National avalanche bulletin no. 90

for Monday, 2 February 2009

issue date 1.2.2009, 18:30 hours

Escalating avalanche danger amid storm winds and snowfall

Current conditions

On Sunday it was heavily overcast in most regions. However, in far eastern regions there were bright spells in the afternoon due to foehn wind influence. Snow flurries swept over the northern flank of the Alps and light snowfall set in from the south. The midday temperatures were minus 6 degrees in western regions, minus 9 degrees in eastern and southern regions. Southwesterly winds increased in strength throughout the day and were widespread of moderate strength at midday. In wind protected, shady areas the snowpack layers near the surface are faceted and loosely packed. In these places, surface hoar is evident atop the surface widespread. On very steep south facing slopes, the snow surface is generally encrusted. Particularly in areas adjacent to ridge lines and in pass areas, in addition, wind crusts are evident.

Short-term development

Along the Main Alpine Ridge and south thereof, it is expected to be overcast on Monday and some new snow is anticipated. In northern Ticino, in Val Calanca, in Val Moesa and in Bergell, 30 to 50 cm of snow is expected. In the Saastal, in the Simplon region, the Upper Engadine, Puschlav and in Sotto Ceneri, 15 to 30 cm of new snow is expected. In the immediately bordering regions and in southern Valais, about 10 cm is expected. The snowfall level will be at low altitude. The major thrust of precipitation will arrive in the latter part of the day. Further to the north it will be overcast, although generally dry. In the areas exposed to foehn influence there will be intermittently bright skies. The midday temperatures will be minus 2 degrees in northern regions and minus 4 degrees in southern regions. Strong to stormy southerly winds will prevail. In areas exposed to wind, both old and new snow will be transported.

Avalanche danger forecast for Monday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on west to north to southeast facing wind loaded slopes as well as in areas adjacent to ridge lines in all aspects. Along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Saastal to the Bernina pass and south thereof, the avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 2000 m. In these places, the snowfall together with the wind will drive the avalanche danger to Level 3 - "considerable" - during the afternoon. Slab avalanches can easily be triggered by a single backcountry skier or freerider and will increasingly frequently attain medium size.

In the remaining regions the avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 1800 m. The storm winds will give rise to freshly formed snowdrift accumulations. These, in turn, are expected to bond poorly with the old snowpack in general and thus be easily triggered. The snowdrift accumulations will increase in frequency and will at the same time become larger in size. In these regions as well, the danger level "considerable" (Level 3) will be reached in the course of the afternoon, in high alpine regions even a bit earlier. Caution and increasing restraint are imperative.

Trend for Tuesday and Wednesday

On Tuesday, additional snowfall is expected in southern regions. In the remaining regions it will be overcast with bright spells brought about by foehn wind influence, particularly in eastern regions. The southwesterly winds are expected to slacken off. On Wednesday it will be intermittently sunny. The avalanche danger is expected to increase somewhat on Tuesday.

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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Regional avalanche bulletins (Fr. 0.50/MMS)

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LAWOVS Upper Valais
LAWNGR North and Central Grisons
LAWSGR South Grisons
LAWBEO Bernese Oberland
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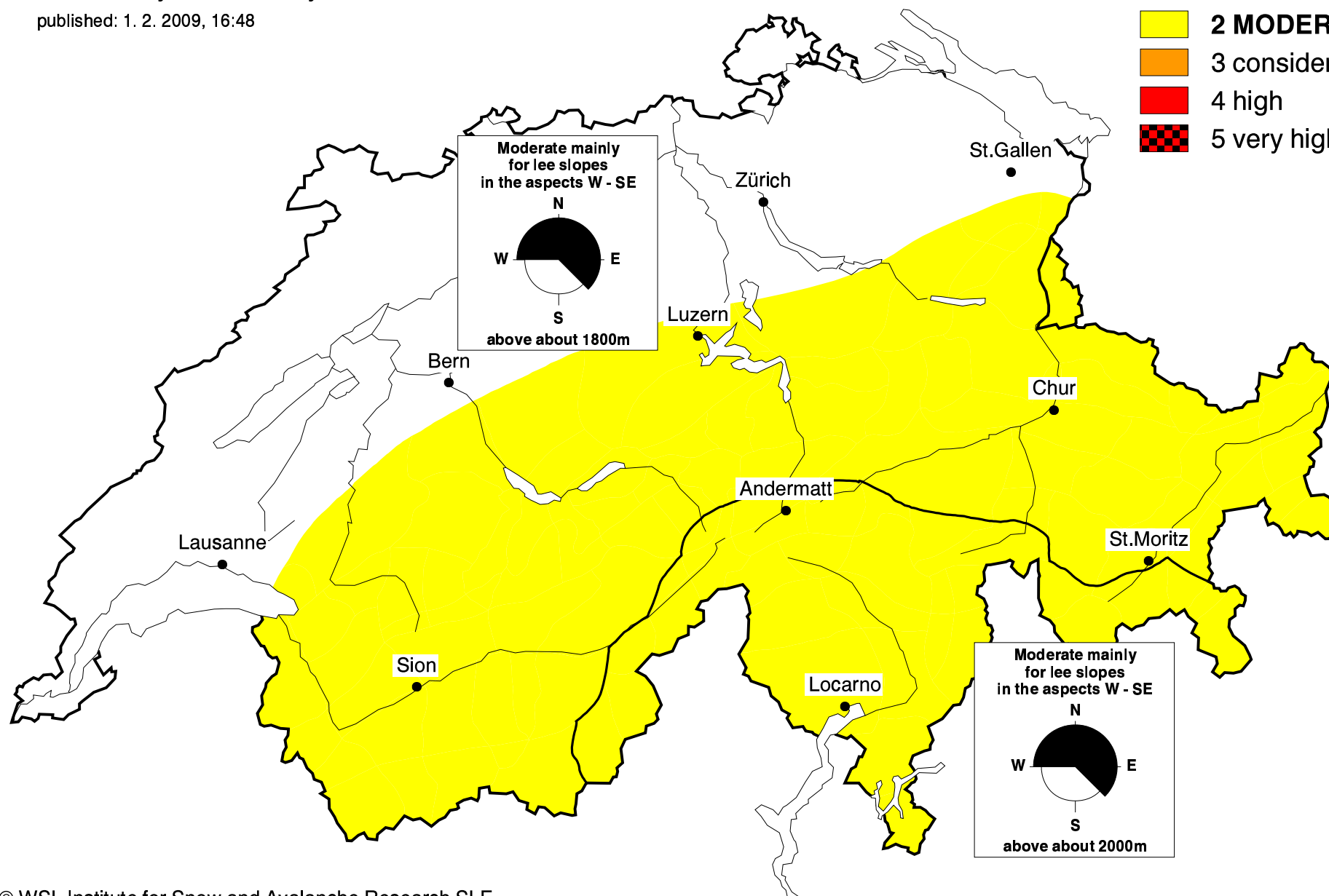
Avalanche danger forecast

for Monday, 2. February 2009

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

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Danger level

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

