

National avalanche bulletin no. 105

for Tuesday, 17 February 2009

issue date 16.2.2009, 18:30 hours

Escalating avalanche danger due to snowfall and wind

Current conditions

On Monday, clouds moved over northern regions, and as of midday there was a bit of new snow in the northeast. A light to moderate northwesterly wind was blowing. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 7 degrees.

In high alpine and in southern regions, the snowpack has been heavily impacted by wind influence and is often hard. At intermediate altitudes and in wind protected areas, the surface is often composed of loosely packed powder snow. In those places, this provides a rather unfavourable snow surface for the anticipated snowfall.

Short-term development

On Tuesday it is expected to snow down to low lying areas. In the eastern Bernese Alps, in the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps and from northern Grisons into the Samnaun, 30 to 40 cm of new snow is expected. From the Vaud Alps into the western Bernese Oberland, 20 to 30 cm of snowfall is anticipated, elsewhere 10 to 20 cm widespread. In far southern regions it will remain dry. The midday temperature at 2000 will be minus 6 degrees. Strong northwesterly to northerly winds are expected to prevail.

Trigger sensitive snowdrift accumulations are expected to form. These will grow both in frequency and in size over the course of the day, attaining large size in the major areas of precipitation.

Avalanche danger forecast for Tuesday

Northern flank of the Alps; Valais; northern Ticino; Grisons:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

Along the northern flank of the Alps, in northern Grisons, in the Silvretta and in the Samnaun, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 1600 m. The new fallen snow and the snowdrift are expected to bond poorly with the old snowpack. In the course of the day, increasingly frequent natural avalanches are anticipated, some of which will attain medium size. Critical conditions prevail in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs.

In the Valais excluding the Chablais and southern Simplon regions, additionally in central Grisons and in the remaining Engadine, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. The danger stems equally from the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations as well as from individual weak layers in the old snowpack. Natural avalanches are possible in isolated cases. Avalanches can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. Experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards and prudent route selection are imperative.

In the southern Simplon region, in northern Ticino and in the southern valleys of Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Recently formed snowdrift accumulations can be easily unleashed as avalanches and thus, should be avoided.

Central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

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.

The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are generally small sized but prone to triggering. They should be avoided.

Trend for Wednesday and Thursday

In northern regions it will be partly sunny on Wednesday; on Thursday it will be variably cloudy with a bit of snowfall. In southern regions it is expected to be predominantly sunny on both days. Strong northerly winds will prevail at high altitudes. Temperatures will decrease markedly. The avalanche danger will recede only gradually. Even on Wednesday, critical conditions will still prevail for backcountry skiers and freeriders in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs.

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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(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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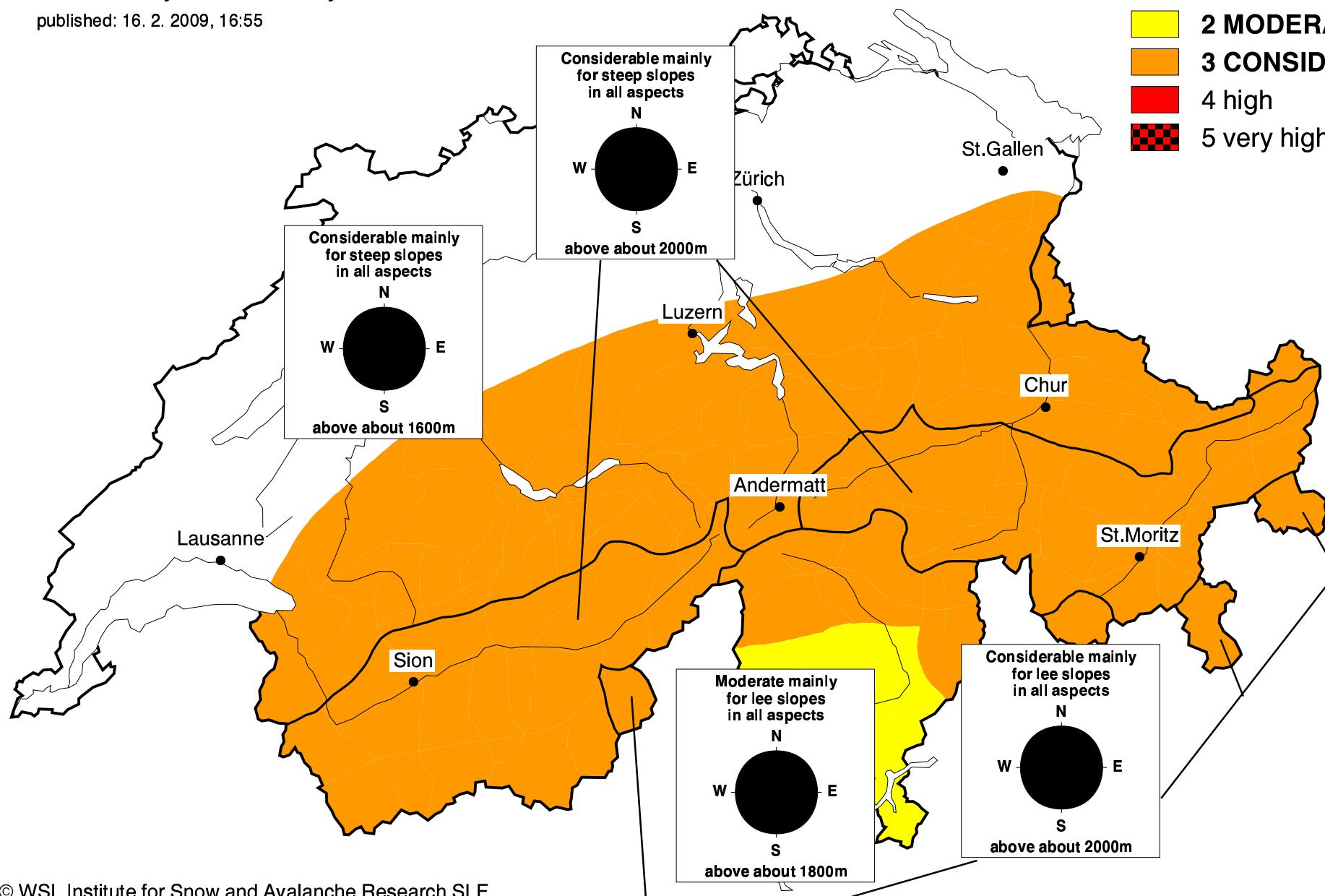
Avalanche danger forecast

for Tuesday, 17. February 2009

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Tuesday, 17. February 2009

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Danger level

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

