

National avalanche bulletin no. 117

for Sunday, 1 March 2009

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Escalating avalanche danger during course of day

Current conditions

On Saturday it was sunny and extraordinarily mild in the mountains of Switzerland. The midday temperature at 2000 m was plus 4 degrees, thus making it as much as 10 degrees warmer than the previous day, primarily in northern regions. A light to moderate southerly wind was blowing. The snowpack has continued to settle and consolidate gradually on south facing slopes in particular. The snow surfaces became slightly moist on south facing slopes up to about 3000 m. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons in particular, there are weak, trigger sensitive layers embedded in the snowpack.

Short-term development

On Saturday night it will be partially clear. In the course of the day on Sunday, clouds will move in from the southwest. In eastern regions, it is expected to be predominantly sunny until the afternoon due to foehn wind influence. In southern regions it will be overcast. By evening in western and southern regions, there will be a few centimeters of snowfall above approximately 1500 m. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be zero degrees in northern regions and minus 3 degrees in southern regions. Light to moderate southerly winds will prevail.

Through solar radiation and the daytime warming cycle, the snowpack will, through the course of the day, become increasingly prone to triggering in eastern regions in particular.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Central Valais; Lower Engadine; Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Avalanches can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider and sometimes attain medium size. Particularly in the Lower Engadine and in the Münstertal, natural avalanches will also be possible during the day. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards and cautious route selection are imperative.

Northern flank of the Alps; remaining Valais; northern Grisons; central Grisons; northern Ticino; upper Val Calanca; upper Val Moesa; Upper Engadine; Bergell; Puschlav:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

On the northern flank of the Alps, in northern and in central Grisons not including the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge east of Lukmanier Pass, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep southwest to north to southeast facing slopes above approximately 2000 m. In the remaining regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on west to north to southeast facing steep slopes above approximately 2200 m. Older snowdrift accumulations immediately behind sharp breaks in the terrain as well as transitions into gullies and bowls have to be especially critically assessed. In central Grisons in particular, avalanches in areas where the snow tends to be shallow can fracture and trigger down to the lowermost layers of the snowpack. Prudent route selection is important.

Central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri; lower Val Calanca; lower Val Moesa:

Low avalanche danger (Level 1)

The avalanche prone locations are still to be found primarily in extremely steep terrain. Sluffs can sweep along persons and cause them to fall.

The avalanche danger is expected to increase on south facing slopes in particular over the course of the day. This escalating danger will be especially pronounced in the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps, in northern and central Grisons and in the Lower Engadine, where the longest periods of sunshine are anticipated. Below about 2000 m, wet snowslides can be expected. Full depth snowslides can be unleashed in all regions, including at high altitudes.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday and Tuesday it will be predominantly overcast. Only a bit of snowfall is expected. The avalanche danger will gradually subside.

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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0900 162 138 / 338 Alpine Weather Report MeteoSwiss phone/fax
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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

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Avalanche danger forecast

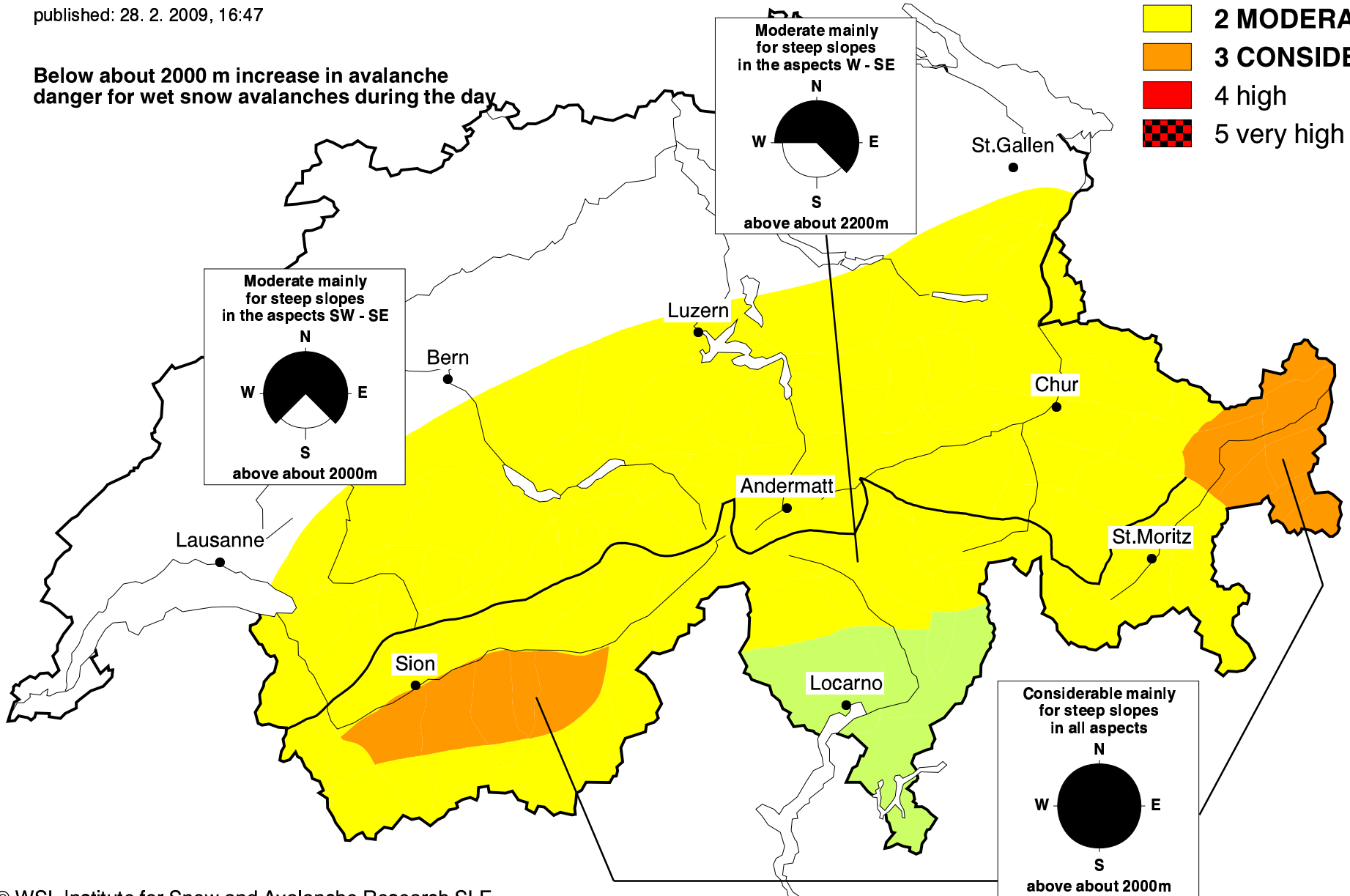
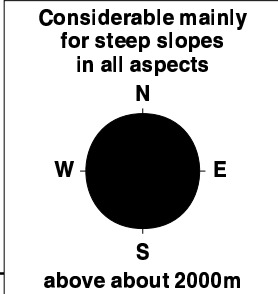
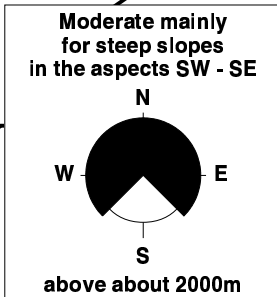
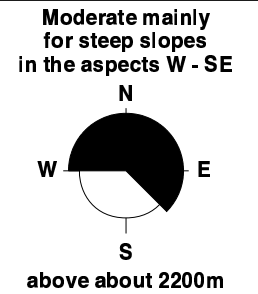
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Below about 2000 m increase in avalanche danger for wet snow avalanches during the day

Danger level

-  1 LOW
-  2 MODERATE
-  3 CONSIDERABLE
-  4 high
-  5 very high








Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 1. March 2009

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Below about 2400 m increase in avalanche danger for wet snow avalanches during the day

Danger level

-  1 LOW
-  2 MODERATE
-  3 CONSIDERABLE
-  4 high
-  5 very high

