

National avalanche bulletin no. 121

for Thursday, 5 March 2009

issue date 4.3.2009, 18:30 hours

High avalanche danger in some regions of Ticino and Grisons

Current conditions

On Wednesday it was predominantly sunny in northern regions. On the Main Alpine Ridge and south thereof, it was heavily overcast. From Tuesday to Wednesday afternoon on the southern flank of the Alps, there was 10 to 20 cm of new snow, in northwestern Ticino as much as 40 cm. In the directly bordering regions, there was up to 10 cm of snowfall. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were minus 2 degrees on the northern flank of the Alps; south thereof, minus 4 degrees. A moderate to strong southerly wind was blowing, in regions exposed to foehn wind influence and on the Main Alpine Ridge the wind was intermittently stormy. The wind led to the widespread formation of snowdrift accumulations which are prone to triggering. In northern regions the accumulations were generally small sized; in the central and eastern parts of the Main Alpine Ridge in particular, snowdrifts are larger and more frequent. Above approximately 1000 m there is an area wide snowpack. In flat fields up to altitudes of about 1500 m the snowpack is wet. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons in particular, there are poorly consolidated, faceted layers embedded inside the snowpack.

Short-term development

During the night, the snowfall will intensify on the southern flank of the Alps and towards Thursday morning it will spread into northern regions. By Thursday evening above approximately 1500 m on the Main Alpine Ridge from the Saastal into the Bernina region and south thereof, 40 to 60 cm of new snow is expected. In the remaining regions, 20 to 40 cm of snowfall is anticipated widespread. The forecast for snowfall is uncertain. The midday temperatures at 2000 m are minus 7 degrees in northern regions and minus 5 degrees in southern regions. The winds are expected to slacken off during the night, then on Thursday shift to easterly to northeasterly and be of moderate strength.

The new fallen snow will be transported in areas adjacent to ridge lines in particular. Older snowdrift accumulations will be blanketed over by the drifting.

Avalanche danger forecast for Thursday

Southern flank of the Alps not including Sotto Ceneri; in addition, Engadine:

High avalanche danger (Level 4)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 1400 m. Medium sized avalanches are expected to be naturally triggered with increasing frequency. Particularly in multiple starting zones where avalanches have not yet been discharged, even large sized avalanches are expected to fracture, which can in turn sweep along the wet snow at intermediate altitudes. Exposed parts of transportation routes are endangered. For backcountry skiing and freeriding tours, the conditions are unfavourable.

Northern flank of the Alps; Valais not including southern Simplon region; in addition, northern and central Grisons; Sotto Ceneri:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found in all aspects. In the Valais not including the southern Simplon region, in Urseren, in central Grisons not including northern Surselva and in Sotto Ceneri, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 1800 m. Natural avalanches are possible. In the inneralpine regions, avalanches can fracture down to lower levels of the old snowpack and in isolated cases attain medium size.

In the remaining parts of the northern flank of the Alps, in the northern Surselva and in northern Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes above approximately 2000 m. In the course of the day, avalanche prone locations will become increasingly more frequent.

In all regions of this danger level, a great deal of experience in the assessment of avalanche hazards is imperative.

Natural full depth snowslides are possible up to high altitudes. Caution is urged towards fresh glide cracks.

Trend for Friday and Saturday

On Friday and Saturday in northern regions, further snowfall is expected. The snowfall level is expected to reach down to low lying areas. In southern regions it will turn increasingly sunny under the influence of strong, northerly foehn winds. The avalanche danger will increase in northern regions; in southern regions it will gradually diminish.

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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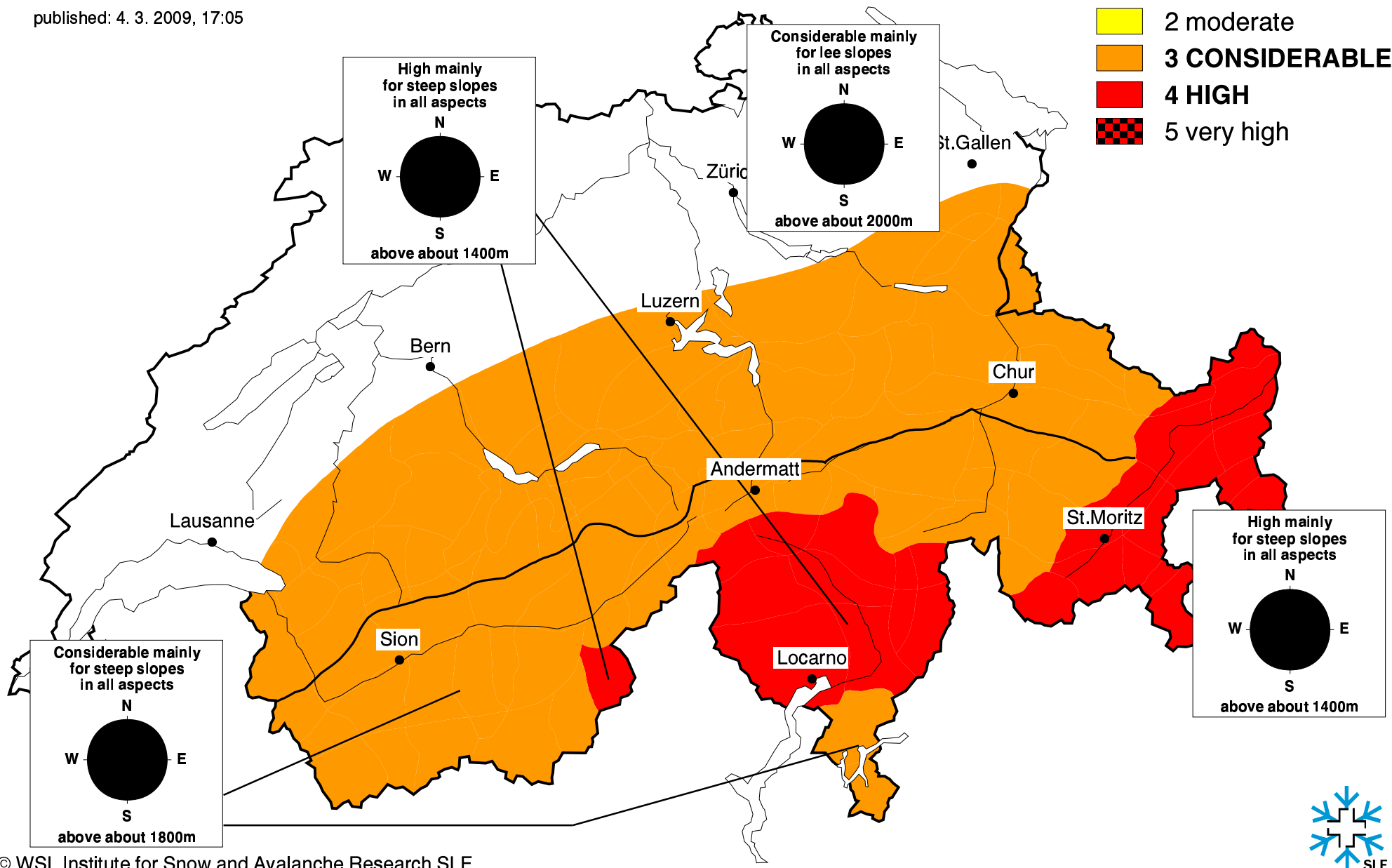
Avalanche danger forecast

for Thursday, 5. March 2009

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Thursday, 5. March 2009

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Danger level

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

