

National avalanche bulletin no. 123

for Saturday, 7 March 2009

issue date 6.3.2009, 18:30 hours

Avalanche danger is considerable

Current conditions

On Friday it was heavily overcast in most regions; in the Engadine the skies brightened intermittently. On the northern flank of the Alps there was ongoing snowfall. From Thursday until Friday afternoon in the Jura, in the western Lower Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps not including Urseren, there was 20 to 40 cm of new snow. In the remaining Valais there was 10 to 20 cm of snowfall, elsewhere less. Over the course of three days, from Tuesday until Friday afternoon, above approximately 1800 m in the Upper Valais, in the Gotthard region, on the southern flank of the Alps not including the Münstertal as well as in the Bernina region, there was 50 to 80 cm of new snow; in the Bedrettal as much as 100 cm. In the Jura, in the Lower Valais, in the western and central parts of the northern flank of the Alps and in the Upper Engadine, 25 to 50 cm of snow fell; in the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps and in the remaining Grisons, there was 10 to 25 cm of snowfall. On Friday the midday temperatures at 2000 m were minus 7 degrees in northern regions and minus 4 degrees in southern regions. A moderate northerly wind was blowing, which transported the loosely packed new fallen snow in areas adjacent to ridge lines and in pass areas in particular.

In southern regions the avalanche situation has quieted down. Natural avalanches have still been observed in isolated cases. In northern regions the new fallen snow and snowdrift are prone to triggering. Particularly in the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, poorly consolidated, faceted layers are embedded inside the snowpack.

Short-term development

Especially during Friday night in northern regions, additional snowfall is still expected. In the course of the day on Saturday, the precipitation will taper off in northeastern regions. From Friday evening until Saturday midday on the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Alps to Liechtenstein above approximately 1000 m, 15 to 30 cm of new snow is expected. On the remaining northern flank of the Alps, in the Gotthard region and in northern Grisons, 5 to 15 cm of snowfall is anticipated. On the southern flank of the Alps it is expected to remain dry. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be minus 7 degrees in northern regions and minus 2 degrees in southern regions. Moderate to strong northerly winds will prevail.

Both the loosely packed layers nearest to the surface of the snowpack and the new fallen snow will be transported. In western and in southern regions, the snowpack will be weakened in the course of the day on sun-bathed slopes in particular through solar radiation and the daytime warming cycle.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found in all expositions.

On the southern flank of the Alps, the avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 1600 m. The major hazards arise from the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations and from the daytime warming cycle. In isolated cases natural avalanches are possible which can attain medium size.

In the Jura, in the western and central parts of the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais not including the southern Simplon region, in the remaining Gotthard region and in the northern Surselva, the avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 1800 m. Particularly in the northern regions, natural avalanches are possible which can attain medium size.

In the remaining central Grisons and in the Engadine, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes above approximately 2000 m. In the eastern part of the northern flank of the Alps and in northern Grisons, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes above approximately 2000 m; in the Jura primarily on wind loaded slopes above approximately 1400 m. In these regions, the major danger stems from freshly deposited snowdrift.

In all the regions of this danger level, a single backcountry skier or freerider can trigger an avalanche.

In western and southern regions at intermediate altitudes in particular, naturally triggered full depth snowslides and wet snow avalanches can be expected, especially on steep, sun-bathed slopes and hillsides adjacent to roads. Exposed parts of transportation routes can be placed at risk.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On Sunday it is expected to be sunny and milder. In the course of the day, clouds will move across northern regions. During Saturday night in western and northern regions, snowfall will set in, accompanied by strong westerly winds. The avalanche danger will recede slightly to begin with, but will be subject to the daytime warming cycle on Sunday. On Monday it will increase in some regions.

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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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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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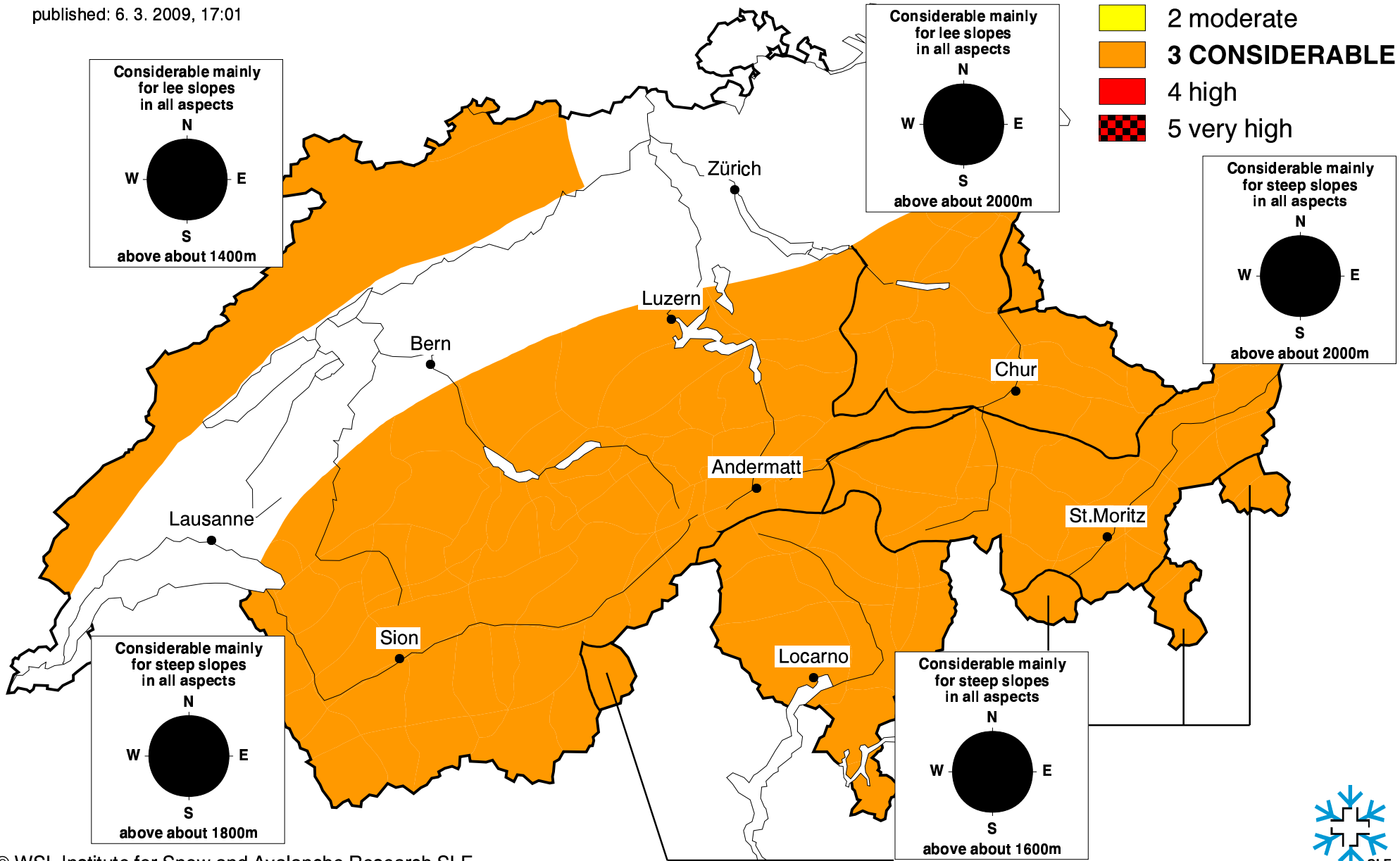
Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 7. March 2009

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 7. March 2009

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-  1 low
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-  **3 CONSIDERABLE**
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