

National avalanche bulletin no. 126

for Tuesday, 10 March 2009

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Widespread considerable avalanche danger

Current conditions

Monday was overcast on the northern flank of the Alps and in Valais, bright at times in northern Ticino and Grisons, and sunny in central and southern Ticino. Showery snowfalls occurred in the north and west in particular. North of a line between the Rhone and Rhine, and in Lower Valais, 10 to 20 cm of snow fell. As much as 40 cm fell in some localities. Elsewhere, 5 to 10 cm of snow fell. On the southern flank of the Swiss Alps it remained dry. Midday temperatures were about minus 9 degrees in the north and minus 7 degrees on the southern flank of the Alps. The northwesterly wind was strong to very strong during the night, then moderate during the day.

A lot of snow has been transported by the stormy weather. The snowpack has been influenced by the wind over a wide area. In the inneralpine regions of Valais and Lower Engadine in particular, the mostly thick snowpack is prone to triggering even in the deeper layers. Weakly bonded, faceted layers exist in the snowpack here; in some cases, the entire base of the snowpack is weak. These conditions also prevail close to the tree line in particular. The bonding of the snowpack is most favourable on the southern flank of the Alps.

Short-term development

Tuesday will be mostly very cloudy and snow will fall in some regions. It will be sunny at times only in central and southern Ticino. By Tuesday evening the following quantities of fresh snow are expected: in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and Lower Valais, 15 to 30 cm; in the other regions, up to 10 cm. In the far south it will remain dry. The snowfall level will be approximately 800 m. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be about minus 6 degrees. The west to northwesterly wind will be strong.

Avalanche danger forecast for Tuesday

Northern flank of the Alps; Valais; Gotthard region; northern and central Grisons; Engadine; Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (level 3)

On the northern flank of the Alps and in Valais, the Gotthard region, Lower Engadine and Münstertal, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1800 m. A single person can easily release avalanches in the near-surface layers of the snowpack. In particular, the fresh snow drift accumulations are prone to triggering over a wide area. In addition, in the inneralpine regions of Valais and in Lower Engadine and Münstertal, avalanches can be released in deeper layers of the old snowpack and reach medium size. Isolated natural avalanches are possible.

In northern and central Grisons and in Upper Engadine, the avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, on wind-loaded slopes of all aspects above approximately 2200 m. Fresh snow drift accumulations behind abrupt changes in slope angle, and in gullies and bowls, can be released easily and are to be avoided.

In all the named regions, experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection are important.

Northern Ticino excluding Val Bedretto and Upper Valle Leventina; also central Ticino; Val Calanca; Val Moesa; Bergell; Puschlav:

Moderate avalanche danger (level 2)

Avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, on wind-loaded slopes of all aspects above approximately 1800 m. Fresh snow drift accumulations formed by the northerly wind must be evaluated with care and prudence.

Southern Ticino:

Low avalanche danger (level 1)

Isolated avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, in gullies and bowls with generally small snow drift accumulations and in shady, extremely steep terrain.

Isolated full-depth avalanches are possible below approximately 2500 m in all regions.

Trend for Wednesday and Thursday

On Wednesday it will snow, in particular on the northern flank of the Alps. The weather will brighten up from the west. It will be mostly sunny in the south. The weather will be mostly sunny in all regions on Thursday. The avalanche danger will not change significantly.

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)

Weather Information in collaboration with **MeteoSwiss**

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

WAP: wap.slf.ch

Teletext: Page 782 (SF DRS)

Phone: 187 (Fr. 0.50/call and min)

Feedback information:

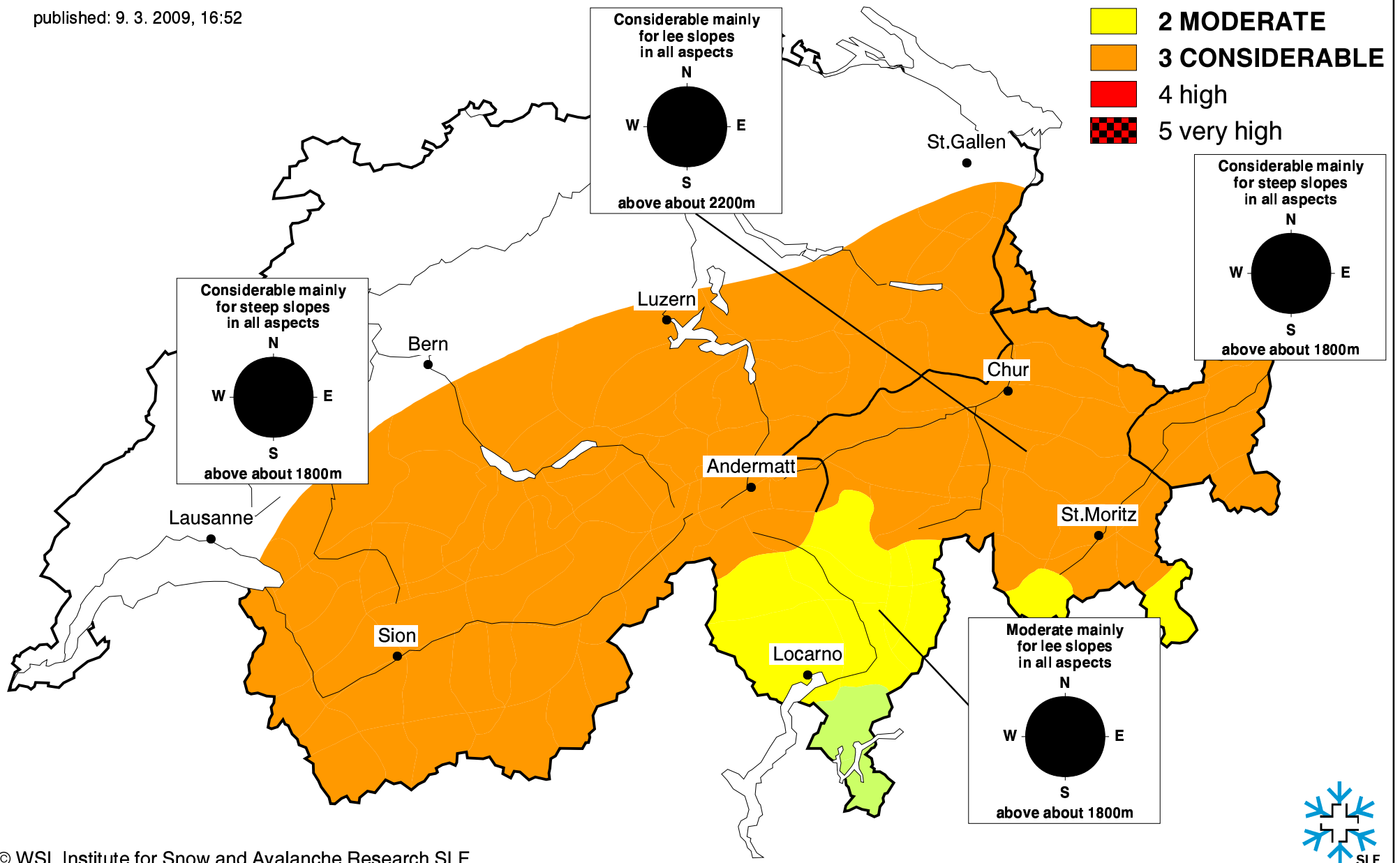
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