

National avalanche bulletin no. 22

for Saturday, 5 December 2009

issue date 4.12.2009, 18:30 hours

Avalanche prone locations blanketed with snow, considerable danger in some regions

Current conditions

Until Friday mid-morning, there was moderate snowfall widespread in the Swiss Alps. Towards midday, it gradually cleared up from the west. A light to moderate strength northerly wind was blowing. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were minus 7 degrees in northern regions and minus 4 in southern regions.

The snow depths at 2000 m in the central part of the northern flank of the Alps, in the central and eastern parts of the Main Alpine Ridge into the Bernina region as well as on the southern flank of the Alps not including the Münstertal are between 100 and 140 cm, in the bordering regions 80 to 100 cm. In the Vaud and Fribourg Alps as well as in the Lower Valais, in northern Grisons, in the Lower Engadine and in the Münstertal, there is 50 to 80 cm of snow.

The snow, which previous to the last major precipitation at the beginning of the week lay above approximately 2000 m, is heavily transformed on shady slopes in particular. The bonding to the fresher snow lying atop it is prone to triggering. In addition, the newly fallen snow on Friday was easily triggered on sunny slopes.

Short-term development

On Saturday the sun is expected to shine intermittently, despite the presence of cloudbanks. Temperatures are expected to rise again. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be about minus 2 degrees. The wind will shift from northerly to westerly and be of moderate strength.

Through the increasing temperatures, naturally triggered avalanches of the surface layers of the snowpack can be expected below about 2400 m on sun-bathed slopes in particular. These avalanches can also sweep along deeper lying layers of the snowpack in isolated cases.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern Alpine Ridge from the Wildstrubel into the St. Gallen Oberland; northern and central Grisons not including Prättigau; western Lower Valais; Main Alpine Ridge from Monte Rosa into the Bernina region; Upper Engadine; Puschlav and Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes primarily in western to northern to southeastern expositions above approximately 2200 m. The hazards stem both from the weak layers in transition zones to the old snow as well as from the freshly fallen snow. Ski tourers and freeriders can trigger medium sized avalanches, and be buried by them, primarily on shade-exposition slopes. The snowfall from Friday can be naturally triggered primarily on sunny slopes, releasing generally small sized avalanches. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, extensive experience in the evaluation of avalanche perils, as well as cautious route selection, are imperative.

Prealps; remaining regions of northern flank of the Alps; Prättigau; Lower Engadine; remaining regions of the Valais; Ticino south of Main Alpine Ridge; lower Val Calanca and lower Val Moesa:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 1800 m. The major hazard stems from the freshly fallen snow as well as the snowdrift accumulations, tending to be rather small sized, which are deposited atop a loosely packed snow base or a weak crust. Avalanches can be triggered even by minimum additional loading in isolated cases.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

In northern regions it will be partly sunny on Sunday, amidst strong westerly winds. On Monday, foehn induced bright spells are anticipated. In southern regions, there will be sunshine on Sunday; on Monday 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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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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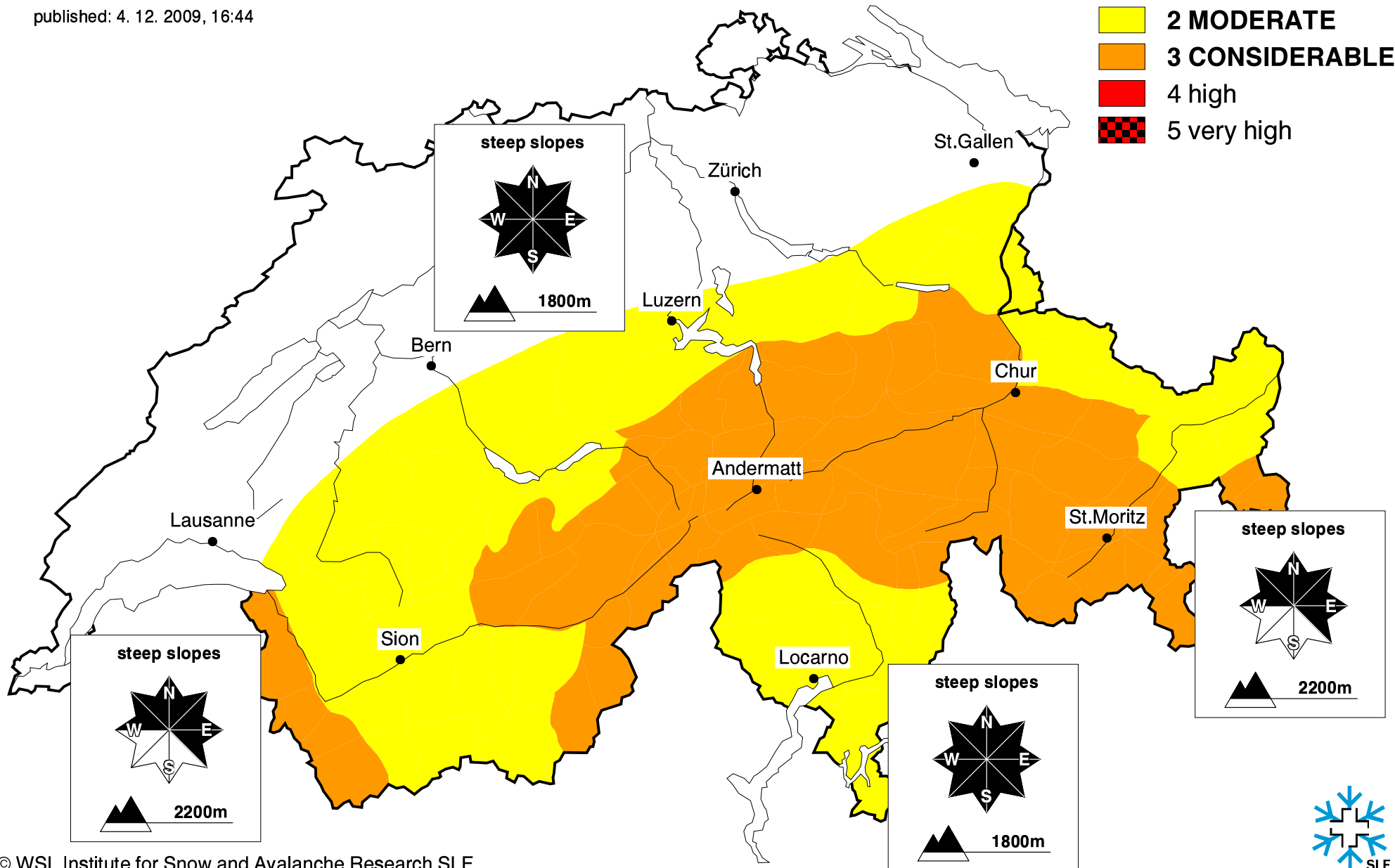
Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 5. December 2009

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 5. December 2009

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Danger level

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

