

National avalanche bulletin no. 48

for Thursday, 31 December 2009

issue date 30.12.2009, 18:30 hours

Considerable avalanche danger widespread

Current conditions

On Wednesday it was heavily overcast and there was intense precipitation in western regions in particular. Over the last two days from the Vaud Alps into the western part of the Bernese Oberland and in the Lower Valais, there has been 40 to 50 cm of snowfall; in the Trient region 60 cm. In northern Upper Valais, in the remaining Prealps and in the Alpstein region there was 20 to 30 cm of snowfall. Further to the east and to the south, there was significantly less precipitation. The snowfall level was at 2000 m. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were plus 1 degree in northern regions and minus 3 degrees in southern regions. A moderate southwesterly wind was blowing, in some regions the wind was strong.

On the northern flank of the Alps and in the Valais, the snowpack below 2000 m is thoroughly wet from the rain. At high altitudes, the base of the snowpack is weak in places, particularly in the inneralpine regions.

Short-term development

On New Year's Eve in northern regions and in the Valais, 5 to 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated, in far western regions as much as 15 cm. The snowfall level is expected to drop down to 1400 m. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 2 degrees. A still strong southwesterly wind will be blowing at high altitudes during the night, tomorrow during the day it will slacken off to moderate.

Avalanche danger forecast for New Year's Eve

Northern flank of the Alps; Valais; Main Alpine Ridge; Puschlav; Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

From the Vaud Alps into the western part of the Bernese Oberland and in the Valais, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 2000 m. Dry snow avalanches can fracture and sweep along in their wake the wet snowpack at lower altitudes. Particularly on Wednesday night, large sized naturally triggered avalanches are still possible in isolated cases. Exposed sectors of transportation routes are at risk along some stretches.

Backcountry skiing and freeriding tours make severe restraint imperative.

In the remaining regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on west to north to southeast facing wind loaded slopes. Along the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern part of the Bernese Oberland to Liechtenstein not including Urseren, the avalanche prone locations are to be found above approximately 2200 m; on the Main Alpine Ridge from the Furka Pass into the Engadine, as well as in the Puschlav and the Münstertal, above approximately 2600 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. Both the size and the frequency of avalanche prone locations increase with rising altitude.

Away from secured ski runs, extensive experience in the evaluation of avalanche dangers is essential.

Northern and central Grisons not including Main Alpine Ridge; Engadine north of the Inn River; regions south of the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge:

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 freshly formed snowdrift accumulations, which are often to be found in gullies and bowls. In high alpine regions they are more frequent as well as more widely distributed. Especially in the inneralpine regions of Grisons, avalanches can in isolated cases be triggered even in the older layers of the snowpack, particularly in transition areas from shallow to deeper snow. A cautious route selection is important.

Below about 2000 m, moist sluffs are no longer expected except in isolated cases.

Trend for New Year's Day and Saturday

On New Year's Day it will be variably cloudy, accompanied by a bit of snowfall in western and northern regions. On Saturday it will be variable and overcast amidst northwesterly winds, and snowfall is anticipated down to low lying areas. In southern regions it will be quite sunny. The avalanche danger is expected to recede somewhat before again escalating slightly in northern regions on Saturday.

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:

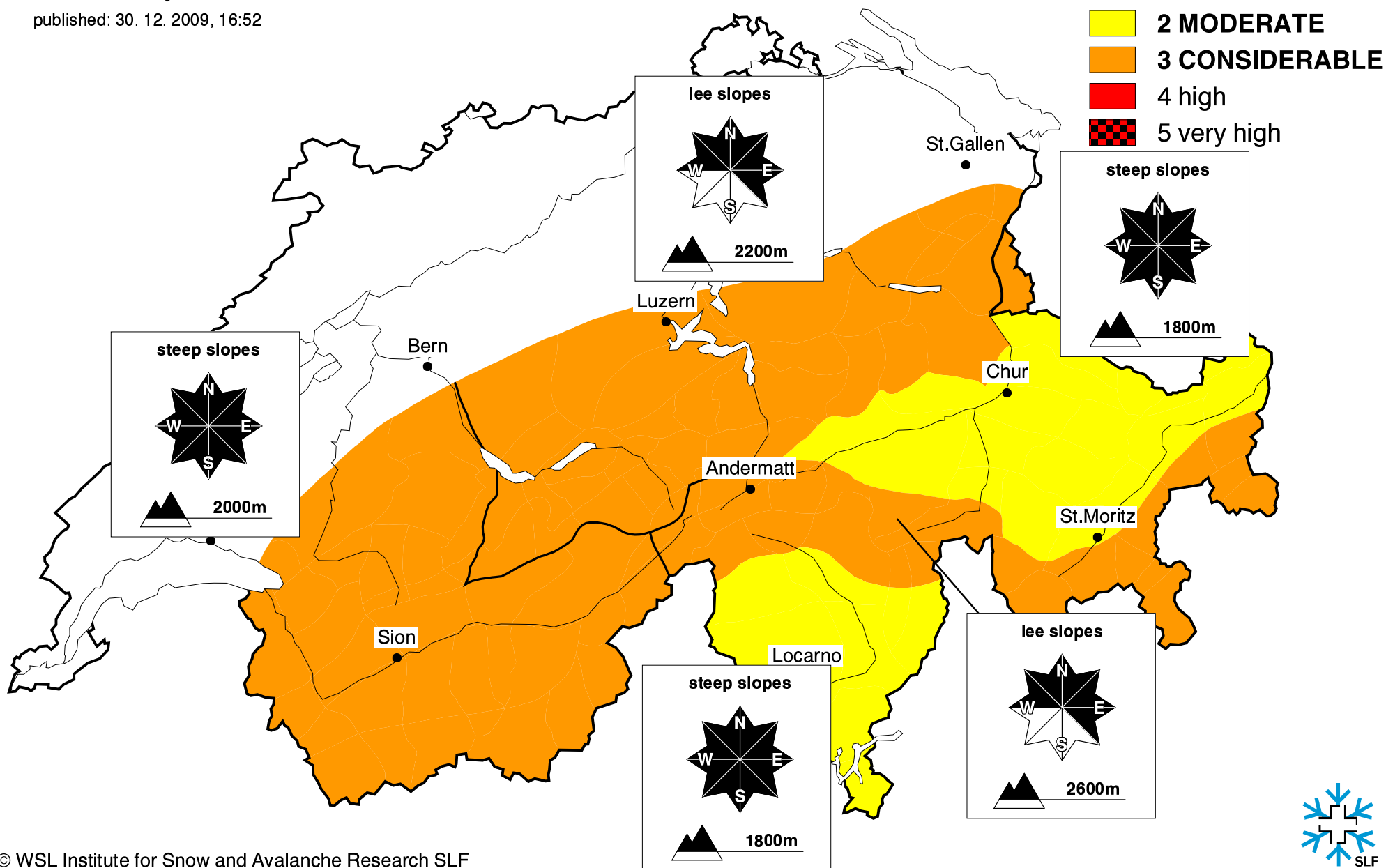
Email: lw@slf.ch

Free phone/fax: 0800 800 187 / 88

Avalanche danger forecast

for Thursday, 31. December 2009

published: 30. 12. 2009, 16:52



Avalanche danger forecast

for Thursday, 31. December 2009

published: 31. 12. 2009, 07:48

