

National avalanche bulletin no. 102

for Tuesday, 23 February 2010

issue date 22.2.2010, 18:30 hours

Widespread treacherous avalanche situation

Current conditions

On Sunday night, a few centimetres of snow fell in Valais, on the southern flank of the Alps and in Engadine. The heaviest snowfall, up to 20 cm, occurred in the Upper Valle Maggia and the southern Simplon region. During the day, it remained overcast on the southern flank of the Alps. In the other regions the weather was bright. Midday temperatures at 2000 m were between minus 1 degree in the west and minus 5 degrees in the south. The southwesterly wind was moderate to strong. The mild temperatures gave rise to the formation of hard snow drift accumulations over a wide area. In many places, these are covering older, consolidated layers which, in turn, are lying on top of loosely bonded layers. The bonding between the individual layers of the snowpack is poor. These conditions are especially prevalent below approximately 2400 to 2700 m and in places where the snow cover is shallow. At higher altitudes, the bonding of the snowpack is more favourable because of the greater exposure to wind throughout the winter. The situation is likewise more favourable in highly frequented backcountry terrain.

Short-term development

Tuesday will be mostly very cloudy and a few centimetres of snow will fall, arriving from the west. The wind will be moderate from the southwest to west. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be about minus 2 degrees in the north and minus 3 degrees in the south.

Avalanche danger forecast for Tuesday

Northern Alpine ridge excluding Lötschental, Aletsch, Alpstein and Liechtenstein; also Champex, main Alpine ridge; northern Ticino; Grisons:

Considerable avalanche danger (level 3)

On the main Alpine ridge from the Gotthard region to Lower Engadine, and in northern Ticino, central Grisons, Upper Engadine, Puschlav and Müntertal, the avalanche prone locations are steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 2000 m. In the other regions subject to this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, on southwest to north to southeast facing wind-loaded slopes above approximately 2000 m.

In all regions, avalanches can easily be released by a single person. The avalanches can be triggered either in the weakly bonded old snow, or in near- surface snow drift accumulations. Medium-sized natural avalanches are possible. Remote triggering can take place in isolated cases, in particular in central Grisons and Engadine. Alarm signs, such as whumpfung sounds, are an indication of the treacherous conditions. Experience in the assessment of the avalanche danger is important.

Regions north of the northern Alpine ridge; Alpstein region; Liechtenstein; central Valais; Lötschental and Aletsch region; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1800 m. In some places, avalanches can easily be released. The prevalence of the avalanche prone locations and the released amounts of snow will, however, be generally small. Fresh snow drift accumulations are to be assessed especially critically. Careful route selection is important.

Below approximately 2000 m, isolated full-depth avalanches and moist avalanches, can occur, in particular on steep grassy slopes.

Trend for Wednesday and Thursday

In the north the weather will be changeable on both days, with sunny intervals and some precipitation. In the south it will be fairly sunny on Wednesday, but increasingly cloudy on Thursday. On Thursday, it will become a little milder still in the west and north. The avalanche danger will decrease slowly.

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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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>

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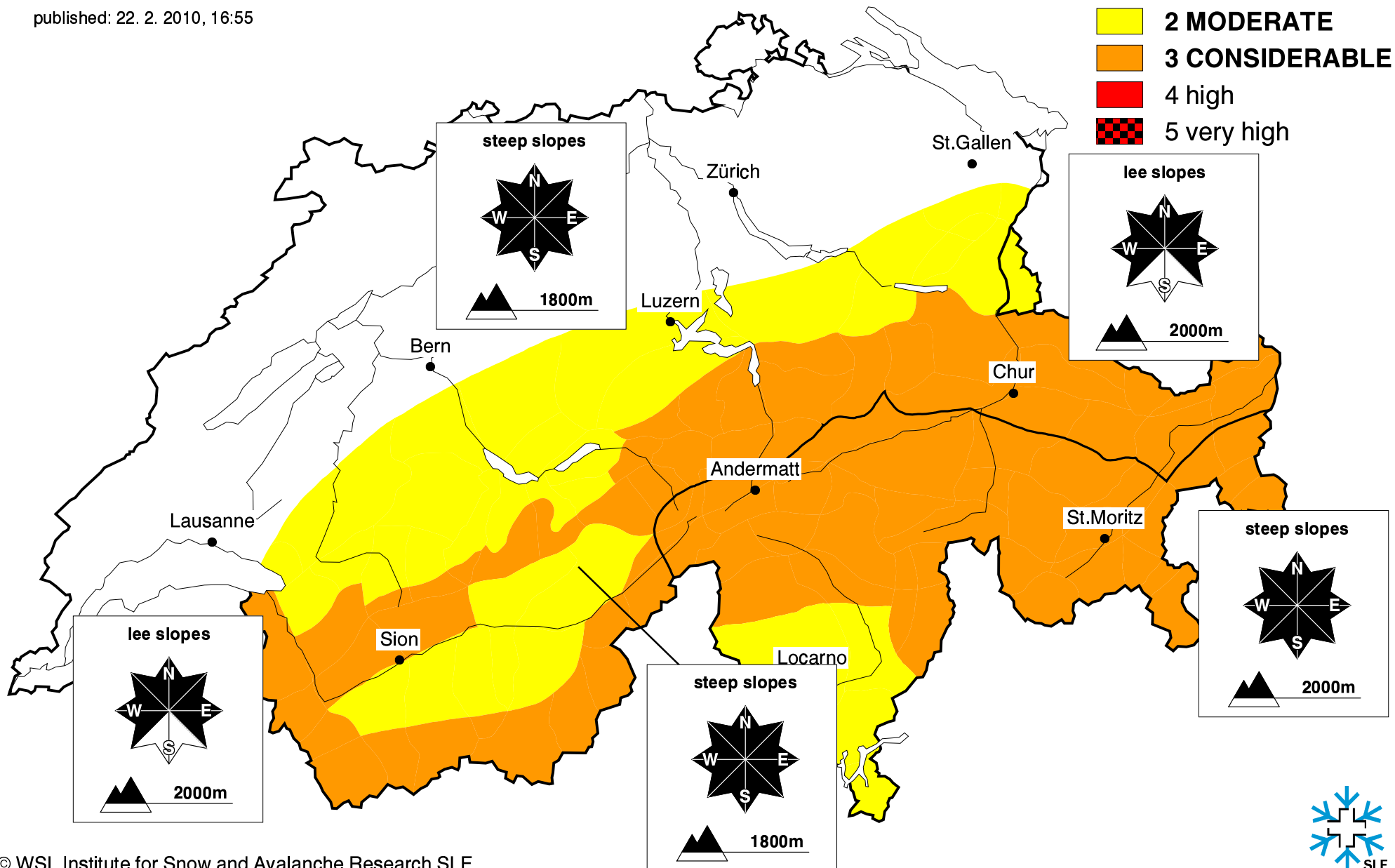
Avalanche danger forecast

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Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

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Danger level

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

