

National avalanche bulletin no. 45

for Thursday, 23 December 2010

issue date 22.12.2010, 18:30 hours

Appreciable rise in avalanche danger in southern regions

Current conditions

On Tuesday night in western and southern regions, there was snowfall. During the day on Wednesday after the final snowfall in southern regions came to an end, it turned increasingly dry. In those northern regions exposed to foehn winds there were bright intervals. Between Tuesday evening and Wednesday evening, there were the following amounts of snowfall: southern flank of the Alps not including Münstertal, 20 to 30 cm; western Lower Valais and northern Valais, 10 to 20 cm, varying from region to region. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were plus 2 degrees in northern regions and minus 1 degree in southern regions. The southerly winds were blowing at strong to storm velocity during the night, then receded to moderate to strong velocity during the day.

Short-term development

On Thursday, snowfall is anticipated primarily in southern regions, elsewhere it will remain overcast. By Thursday evening, the following amounts of snowfall are expected: Main Alpine Ridge from Mattertal to the Bernina Pass and south thereof, 30 to 50 cm; the regions bordering to the north and the remaining Main Alpine Ridge, 20 to 30 cm; in regions further to the north, less. The snowfall level in the valleys on the southern flank of the Alps will be approximately 1000 m; in Sotto Ceneri at about 1700 m; in northern regions at approximately 2000 m. At high altitudes, a strong to storm velocity southerly wind will be blowing, which is expected to slacken off during the afternoon.

In the major areas of precipitation more than anywhere else, large scale snowdrift accumulations are expected to form.

Avalanche danger forecast for Thursday

Valais not including Chablais; the regions of Schreckhorn, Guttannen, Gadmertal, Meiental and Maderanertal; central Grisons; Upper Engadine; Lower Engadine south of the Inn River; Gotthard region; Ticino; southern valleys of Grisons:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

Along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Matterhorn to the Bernina Pass and southwards therefrom, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes in all expositions above approximately 1600 m. The peril is expected to escalate over the course of the day. During the afternoon, increasingly frequent naturally triggered avalanches can be expected. Most of these will reach medium size, but in some cases they could also attain large size. Exposed sectors of transportation routes can be placed at risk in isolated cases. In the remaining regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes of western to northern to southeastern exposition above approximately 2000 m. Even a single backcountry skier or freerider can trigger an avalanche in the fresh snowdrift. In all regions of this danger level, a great deal of experience in the evaluation of avalanche hazards is imperative for backcountry tours.

Northern flank of the Alps not including the regions Schreckhorn, Guttannen; Gadmertal; Meiental, Maderanertal and Urseren; in addition, northern Grisons; Lower Engadine north of the Inn River:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all expositions above approximately 2000 m. The hazardous zones occur most frequently in gullies and bowls. Older snowdrift accumulations can be triggered through larger additional loading in particular. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are relatively small sized and should be assessed with great care.

Due to the mild temperatures and, in some regions, rainfall, full depth snowslides and wet snow avalanches can be expected below about 2000 m.

Trend for Friday and Saturday

On Friday, the snowfall in southern regions will come to an end. In northern regions, snowfall is anticipated. The snowfall level will descend down to the valleys. In southern regions, the avalanche danger is not expected to change significantly, whereas in northern regions the danger level will increase. On Saturday in northern regions, a bit more snowfall is expected, in southern regions it will be sunny. The avalanche danger is expected to subside somewhat, particularly in southern regions.

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

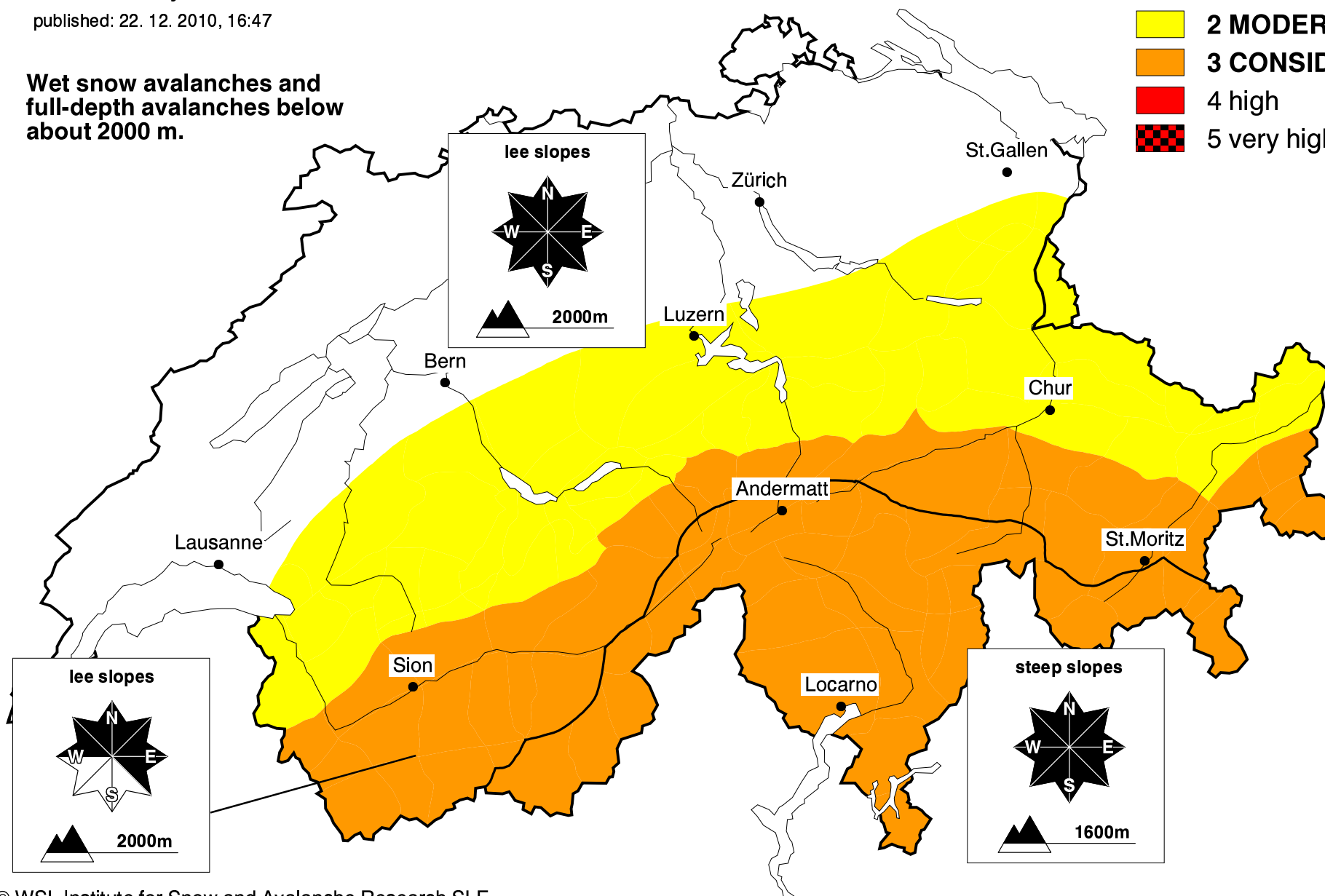
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Wet snow avalanches and
full-depth avalanches below
about 2000 m.

Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

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Wet snow avalanches and
full-depth avalanches below
about 2000 m.

Danger level

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

