

National avalanche bulletin no. 62

for Sunday, 9 January 2011

issue date 8.1.2011, 18:30 hours

The major danger: snowdrift accumulations

Current conditions

On Saturday in the Valais and in northern regions, it turned increasingly sunny. In southern regions it was overcast and in the central part of the southern flank of the Alps, in the Bergell and in the Puschlav, there was 15 to 25 cm of snowfall. In the Valais, in the Gotthard region as well as in central Grisons and the Upper Engadine, there was 5 to 10 cm of new fallen snow. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were between plus 2 degrees in northern regions and minus 2 degrees in southern regions. The southerly wind was blowing at light to moderate velocity; in foehn exposed regions the wind attained strong velocity at times.

Over the last few days, the southerly wind has give rise to layers of snowdrift which in widespread areas have been deposited on top of an old snowpack of loose, faceted crystals. These snowdrift masses can be easily triggered. In the central Lower Valais and in the Upper Valais, more than anywhere else, there are also weak layers embedded deep inside the old snowpack. In northern regions, the snowpack below 2000 to 2400 m is moist, in southern regions it is moist below approximately 1500 m.

Short-term development

On Sunday in northern regions, the skies will brighten up during the morning hours, then turn increasingly cloudy from the west. Above approximately 1500 m, it will begin to snow. In southern regions it will be overcast and light snowfall is anticipated above approximately 1200 m. By evening in the Lower Valais, in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and on the southern flank of the Alps, 5 to 15 cm of fresh fallen snow is anticipated. The wind will be blowing at light to moderate velocity at 2000 m; at 3000 m, as well as in foehn exposed regions, it will be blowing at strong to storm velocity from southwesterly to southerly directions. Particularly at high altitudes, further small to medium sized snowdrift accumulations will continue to form.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Westernmost Lower Valais from Chablais to the Great St. Bernard; Villars; Ovronnaz; central Grisons; Upper Engadine; Ticino; Val Calanca; Val Moesa; Bergell and Puschlav:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the western regions of this danger level, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes of northwestern to northern to southeastern exposition above approximately 2400 m. In the Ticino, Val Calanca, Val Moesa, Bergell and Puschlav, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes of western to northern to eastern exposition above approximately 2200 m. In central Grisons and in the Upper Engadine, the hazardous zones are least frequent of all and are to be found primarily in areas adjacent to ridge lines, in gullies and in bowls, as well as behind crested rims in the terrain in western to northern to eastern exposition above approximately 2200 m. In all regions of this danger level, the freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be easily triggered.

Remaining regions in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and of Lower Valais; Upper Valais; central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps; northern Grisons; Lower Engadine; Müntertal:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes of southwestern to northern to southeastern exposition above approximately 2200 m. Snowdrift accumulations can be easily triggered, although they are generally small sized. With ascending altitude, their frequency and depth increase. In the high alpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, the avalanche danger is considerable.

Below about 2200 m, predominantly small sized wet avalanches, as well as isolated full depth snowslides are possible.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday it will be heavily overcast and snowfall is anticipated, in southern regions as much as 30 cm. On Tuesday, additional snowfall is expected in eastern and in southern regions; in western regions it will be dry and the skies will gradually turn sunnier. The avalanche danger is expected to escalate a bit further in southern regions in particular. In western regions, the danger is expected to 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)

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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

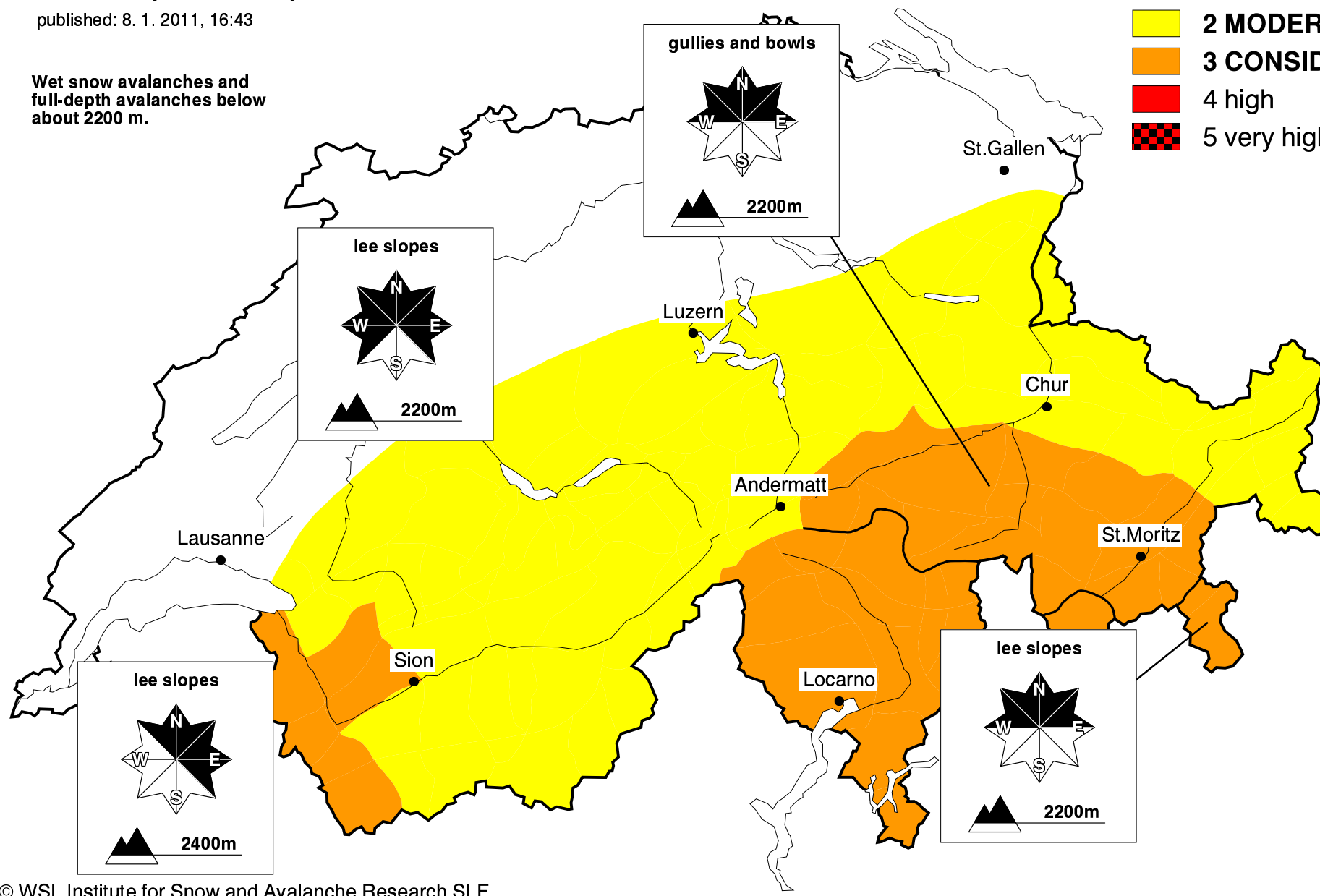
for Sunday, 9. January 2011

published: 8. 1. 2011, 16:43

Wet snow avalanches and
full-depth avalanches below
about 2200 m.

Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 9. January 2011

published: 9. 1. 2011, 07:58

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full-depth avalanches below
about 2200 m.

Danger level

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

