



National avalanche bulletin no. 89

for Saturday, 5 February 2011

issue date 4.2.2011, 18:30 hours

Strong northwesterly winds cause fresh snowdrift accumulations at high altitudes

Current conditions

On Friday it was predominantly sunny in the Swiss Alps. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were zero degrees in northern regions and plus 3 degrees in southern regions. A westerly wind of moderate velocity was blowing at high altitudes. The snow depths are below average for this juncture of the season. At 2000 m widespread, there is 50 to 120 cm of snow on flat surfaced terrain. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and Grisons, there is even less in some places. The uppermost surface of the snowpack on steep slopes adjacent to ridge lines often consists of older or freshly formed snowdrift accumulations. Further distant from ridge lines, the snow layering is highly varied, extending from hard-compacted places to loosely packed, large-grained snow crystals. Increasingly frequently, steep slopes of southern exposition have crusts on the surface up to high altitudes, which in some places are not yet capable of bearing loads. In the inneralpine regions of the Valais and in Grisons, more than anywhere else, there are weak layers embedded inside the snowpack. In general, however, the old snowpack evidences little tendency towards fracture propagation, and only in isolated cases.

Short-term development

Following a night of clear skies, it will be sunny on Saturday. The temperature will rise significantly, climbing to plus 4 degrees by midday at 2000 m. The wind is expected to shift to northwesterly and be blowing at strong velocity at high altitudes. Particularly in gullies and bowls, small but treacherous snowdrift accumulations are expected to form.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern flank of the Alps not including Prealps; Valais; central part of Main Alpine Ridge; Grisons not including lower Val Moesa and lower Val Calanca:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily in gullies and bowls in all expositions. In the southern Valais not including Goms, the treacherous snowdrift accumulations are to be found above approximately 2800 m, in the remaining regions of this danger level they are found above approximately 2500 m. Both the freshly formed and older snowdrift accumulations are predominantly small sized but can be easily triggered. On backcountry skiing and freeriding tours, these places should be avoided whenever possible. Quite apart from the perils of being buried by snow, the hazards of being swept along and falling should be taken into consideration when evaluating routes.

Prealps; Ticino not including the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge; in addition, lower Val Moesa and lower Val Calanca:

Low avalanche danger (Level 1)

Isolated avalanche prone locations are to be found particularly on wind protected slopes adjacent to ridge lines. The small sized snowdrift accumulations should be evaluated with great care. In high alpine regions, the avalanche danger level must be assessed somewhat more critically, due to the strong velocity winds.

On south facing slopes in all regions of the Swiss Alps, moist sluffs and generally small sized avalanches can be expected over the course of the day. This is particularly the case below about 2500 m.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On both days, it is expected to be sunny in the mountains. It will remain mild. The winds will slacken off on Sunday. The danger of dry avalanches is expected to gradually subside. The danger of moist sluffs and avalanches will increase somewhat.

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:

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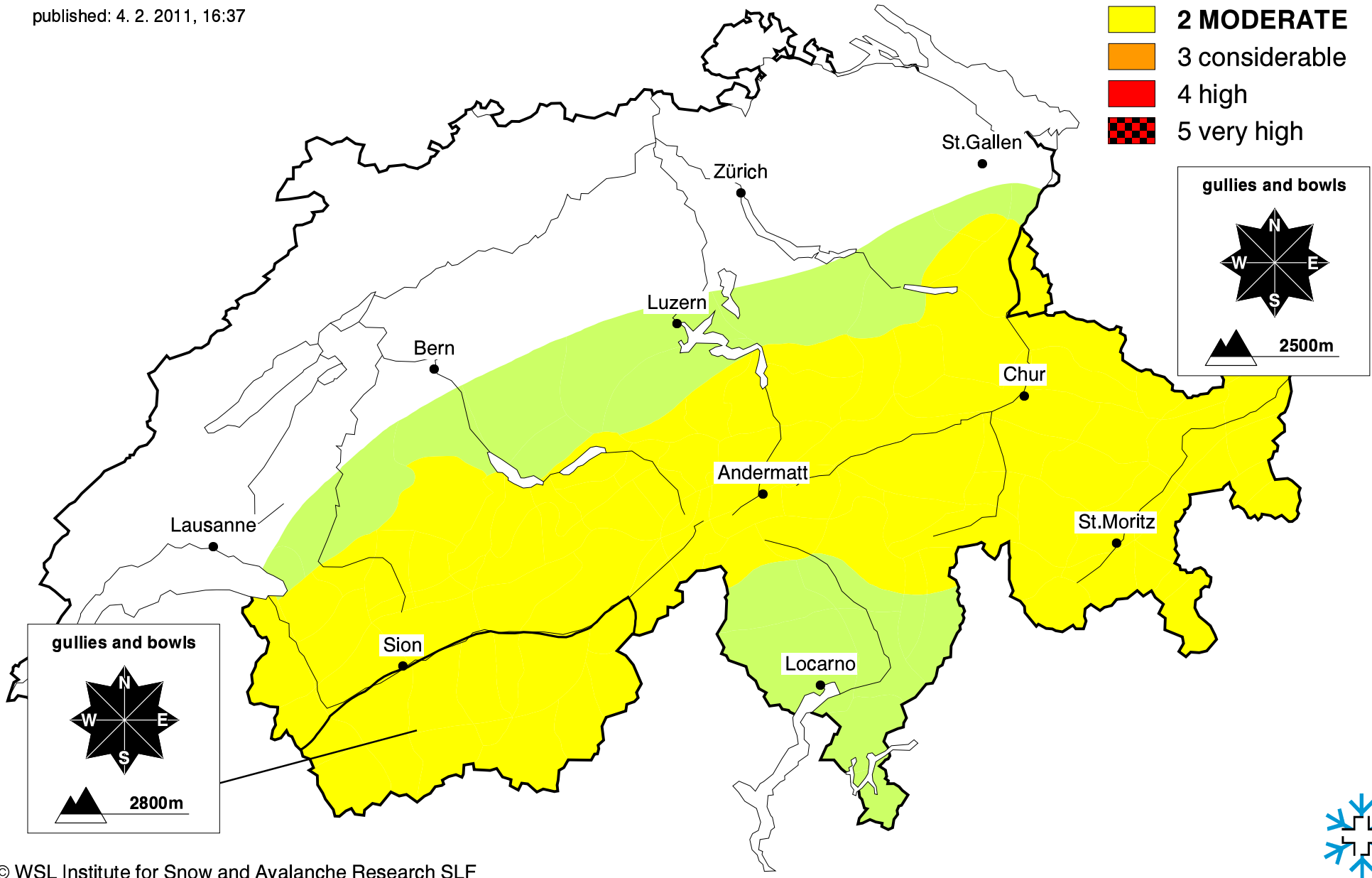
Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 5. February 2011

published: 4. 2. 2011, 16:37

Danger level

-  **1 LOW**
-  **2 MODERATE**
-  **3 considerable**
-  **4 high**
-  **5 very high**








Avalanche danger forecast

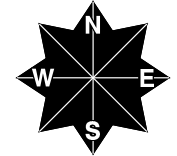
for Saturday, 5. February 2011


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Danger level

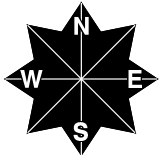
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-  **4 high**
-  **5 very high**


gullies and bowls



 2500m

gullies and bowls



 2800m

