

National avalanche bulletin no. 139

for Sunday, 27 March 2011

issue date 26.3.2011, 18:30 hours

Avalanche danger both considerable and moderate, caution urged on north facing slopes

Current conditions

On Saturday morning it was quite sunny. Over the course of the day, dense convective cloud swiftly moved in from the north and there were light showers on the northern flank of the Alps. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were zero degrees in northern regions and plus 4 degrees in southern regions. The wind was blowing at light to moderate strength from southwesterly directions.

On north facing slopes more than anywhere else, layers of bonded snow lie on top of a soft, faceted old snowpack. These bonded layers are prone to triggering from place to place, particularly in the southern sectors of the Valais and in the inneralpine regions of Grisons. During the morning hours following nights with clear skies, south facing slopes are capable of bearing loads, they subsequently soften up over the course of the day. On east and west facing slopes, the surface crust of the snowpack is capable of bearing loads only to a certain extent, and in some places.

Short-term development

Saturday night will be variably cloudy, accompanied by reduced outgoing longwave radiation. During the day on Sunday there will be bright intervals in inneralpine regions, elsewhere it will be predominantly overcast. In the afternoon, light showers are anticipated. The snowfall level will be about 2000 m. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will be plus 3 degrees in northern regions and plus 1 degree in southern regions. The wind will be blowing at light to moderate velocity from the southwest. Below about 2000 m, the snowpack could become weakened from place to place due to the rain.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Main Alpine Ridge from Grand St. Bernard to the Monte Rosa region; Val d'Anniviers; Turtmanntal; lower valleys of Visp; northern Simplon region; southern Goms;

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes of northwestern to northern to northeastern exposition. In the indicated regions of Lower Valais, the hazardous zones are found above approximately 2400 m; in the indicated regions of Upper Valais, the perilous zones are above approximately 2200 m. In isolated cases, avalanches can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider, which can subsequently attain dangerous size. The avalanche prone locations are most widespread on those backcountry slopes which have been least frequented this winter. Alarm signals such as whumpfung sounds are indicators of the imminent danger. For skiing and freeriding tours in outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in the assessment of avalanche danger is essential.

Northern flank of the Alps; northern Valais; remaining southern Valais; Ticino; Grisons:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on steep slopes in western to northern to eastern exposition. In the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps, the hazardous zones are found above approximately 2000 m, elsewhere above approximately 2200 m. Avalanches can be triggered primarily by large additional loading, but in some places, particularly in the inneralpine regions of Grisons, can even be unleashed by a single backcountry skier or freerider. Avalanches are capable of attaining a dangerous size. In relatively unfrequented terrain, the avalanche prone locations are more widespread than in heavily frequented terrain. A defensive route selection is sensible.

In all regions of the Swiss Alps, the danger of wet avalanches below about 2500 m will be heightened, due to the reduced nocturnal outgoing radiation. Particularly great caution is urged in case of rainfall. Wet snow avalanches can be triggered naturally or, especially in regions with weak snow layering, also be released by persons. Backcountry skiing and freeriding tours in outlying terrain should be brought to a close early in the day.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday it will be overcast. Above approximately 1500 to 1800 m, snowfall is anticipated. On Tuesday, it will turn increasingly sunny in northern regions. In southern regions, it will remain overcast. On Monday, the danger of dry avalanches will increase somewhat in high alpine regions. The danger of wet snow avalanches is not expected to change substantially.

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
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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

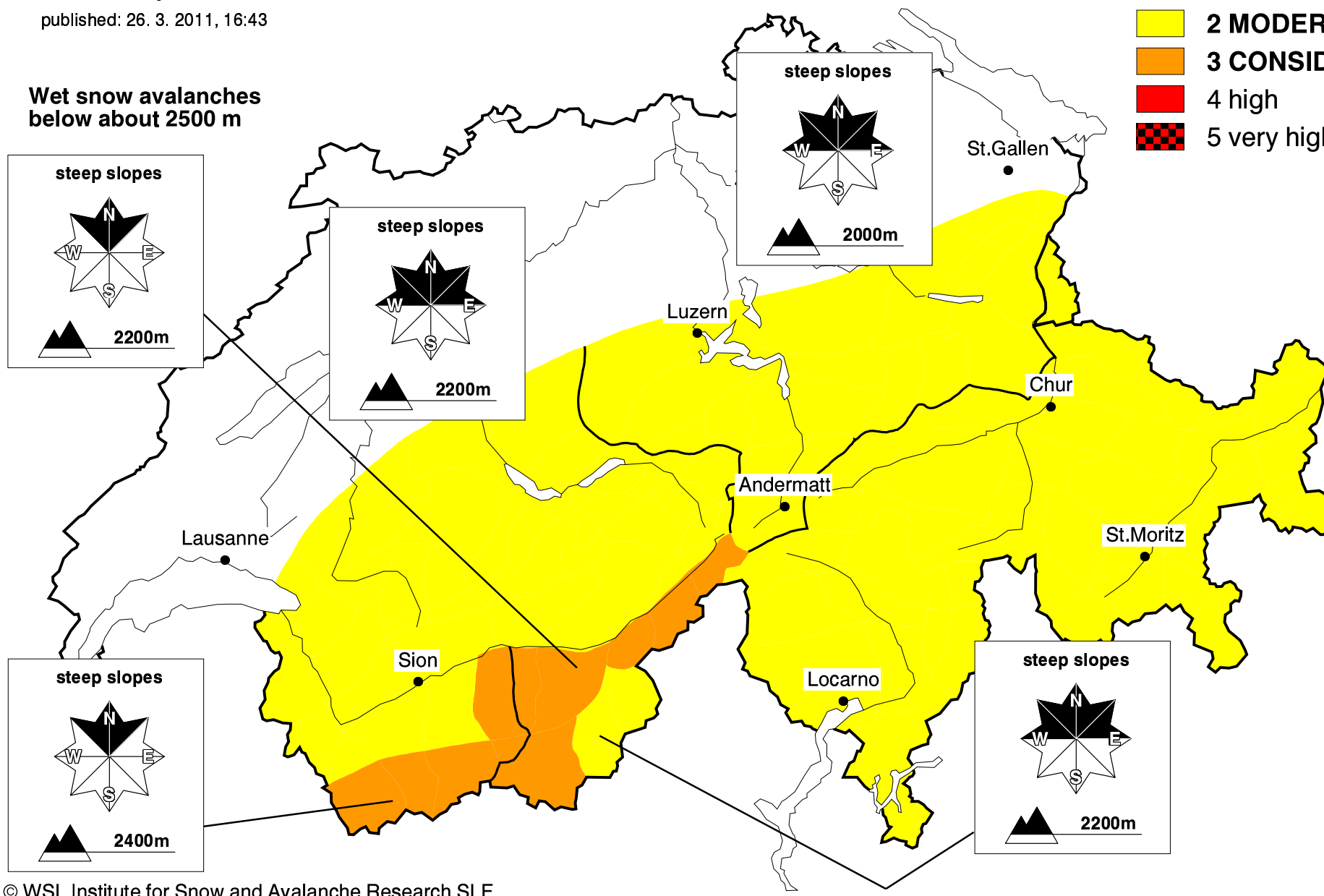
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Wet snow avalanches
below about 2500 m

Danger level

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








Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 27. March 2011

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Wet snow avalanches
below about 2500 m

Danger level

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

