

National avalanche bulletin no. 23

for Sunday, 18 December 2011

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Considerable avalanche danger widespread

Current conditions

On Saturday it was overcast, except in the furthestmost southern regions, and there was snowfall. By Saturday evening on the northern flank of the Alps, there was 15 to 30 cm of new fallen snow; in the Valais, in the Gotthard region and in northern Grisons, 10 to 20 cm; in the remaining Grisons, about 10 cm of fresh fallen snow. In central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri, as well as in southern Grisons, there was hardly any snowfall. On Friday night, the wind was blowing at strong velocity, at Saturday midday at predominantly moderate strength, from northwesterly directions. The midday temperature at 2000 m was minus 9 degrees.

Between Thursday morning and Saturday evening, there were the following amounts of snowfall above approximately 2000 m: western Lower Valais, northern Valais, 120 to 170 cm; Vaud and Bernese Alps, remaining Valais, Bedrettal, 70 to 120 cm; central part of the northern flank of the Alps, Glarner Alps, Surselva, 40 to 70 cm; further to the east, 20 to 40 cm. In central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri, as well as in the southern valleys of Grisons, there was very little snowfall. Under the influence of strong to storm velocity westerly to northwesterly winds, large snowdrift accumulations were formed.

Short-term development

On Sunday in northern and western regions, the snowfall will continue. By evening in the Lower Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps, 10 to 20 cm of new fallen snow is anticipated; in the Upper Valais and in northern Grisons, about 10 cm of fresh fallen snow is expected. In southeastern regions it will remain dry. The wind will be blowing at light to moderate velocity from the northwest. At midday, the temperatures at 2000 m will be minus 10 degrees.

The massive and deep layers of snowdrift of recent days will be blanketed over by loosely packed, new fallen snow.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

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

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all expositions. On the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in the Gotthard region, the danger zones are found primarily above approximately 1800 m; in the remaining regions, above approximately 2000 m. In all regions of this danger level, naturally triggered avalanches are possible. They can attain medium size, in isolated cases even large size, particularly in the Valais, in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and in the Gotthard region. Exposed parts of transportation routes continue to be endangered. Further to the east, the naturally triggered avalanches tend to be small to medium sized. In the Engadine and in the southern valleys of Grisons, there is little likelihood of naturally triggered avalanches.

In all regions of this danger level, avalanches can be triggered by a single backcountry skier or freerider. The situation is very treacherous. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, extensive experience in evaluating avalanche dangers is imperative.

Central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes of all expositions above approximately 1800 m. More recently formed snowdrift accumulations can be easily triggered and should be assessed with great care.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday it will be temporarily dry. On Tuesday in northern regions, it will again begin to snow. It will remain cold. The avalanche danger will subside somewhat on Monday, but can escalate again on Tuesday.

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>

WAP: wap.slf.ch

Teletext: Page 782 (SF DRS)

Phone: 187 (Fr. 0.90/call and min)

Feedback information:

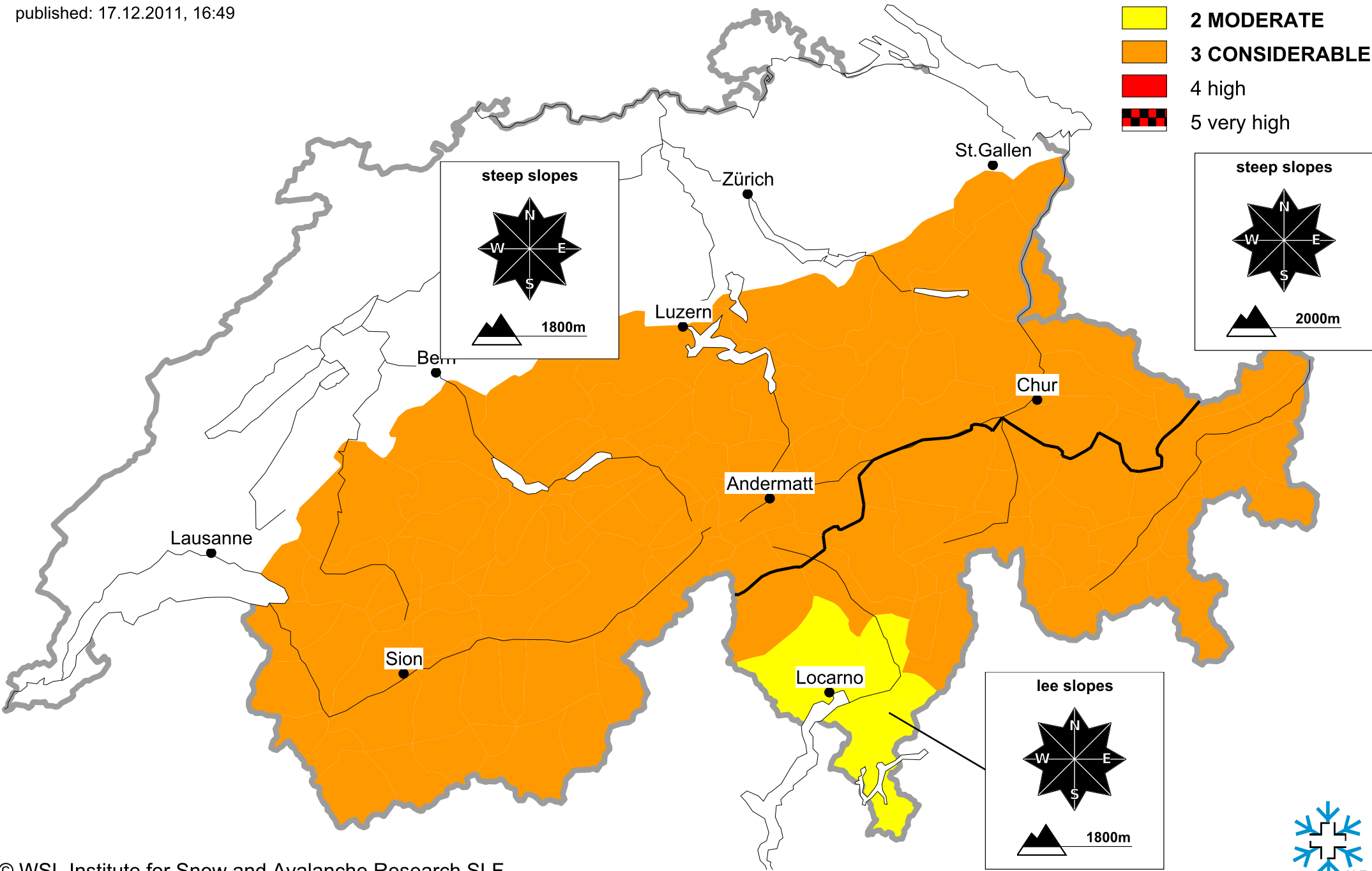
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