

National avalanche bulletin no. 61

for Wednesday, 25 January 2012

issue date 24.1.2012, 18:30 hours

Fresh snow drift accumulations are to be avoided

Current conditions

Tuesday was sunny in the far south, but very cloudy elsewhere. The 30 to 50 cm of snow that fell on the northern flank of the Alps from the Reuss to Alpstein was significantly more than expected. 15 to 30 cm of snow fell in the eastern Bernese Oberland, the central part of the northern flank of the Alps west of the Reuss, the Gotthard region, northern Grisons and northern Lower Engadine, and up to 15 cm fell in the other regions. The midday temperature at 2000 m was about minus 7 degrees. The northwesterly wind was moderate to strong.

The fresh snow drift accumulations are prone to triggering in many cases. The layers underneath, which are deep in some regions, consisting of the recent days' fresh snow and snow drift accumulations, are slowly becoming stable. On the main Alpine ridge in particular, near-ground layers of the snowpack are weakly bonded on north facing slopes above approximately 2500 m.

Short-term development

On Wednesday, it will be mostly sunny on the southern flank of the Alps, but overcast elsewhere. On the northern flank of the Alps from the eastern Bernese Oberland to the Glarus Alps, 10 to 20 cm of snow will fall; less snow will fall in the other regions. Midday temperatures at 2000 m will be about minus 3 degrees in the west and minus 7 degrees in the east. The northwesterly to northerly wind will be moderate to strong at high altitudes in particular. Snow drift accumulations will continue to form, especially in the regions with fresh snow.

Avalanche danger forecast for Wednesday

Eastern Bernese Oberland; central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps; northern Upper Valais; Goms; northern Ticino; northern and central Grisons; Engadine; Münstertal:

Considerable avalanche danger (level 3)

In the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps, and in Grisons north of the Anterior Rhine, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 1800 m. In the other regions subject to this danger level, they are to be found, in particular, on wind-loaded slopes of all aspects above approximately 2000 m.

Fresh snow drift accumulations can be released by a single person and are to be avoided as far as possible. Older snow drift accumulations can still be released, especially by large additional loads. In the regions where a lot of fresh snow has fallen, these accumulations are covered with fresh snow and barely recognisable. Experience in the assessment of the avalanche danger is important.

Vaud and Fribourg Alps; western Bernese Oberland; Lower Valais; Turtmanntal; Visp valleys; Simplon region; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri; Val Calanca; Val Moesa; Bergell; Puschlav:

Moderate avalanche danger (level 2)

In the relevant regions on the northern flank of the Alps and of Valais, the avalanche prone locations are to be found on steep slopes of all aspects above approximately 2000 m. In the relevant regions of Ticino and Grisons, they are to be found, in particular, on wind-loaded slopes of all aspects above approximately 2000 m. Fresh snow drift accumulations can be released by a single person, but are mostly small. Older snow drift accumulations can still be released, especially by large additional loads. Careful route selection is recommended.

All regions: full-depth avalanches up to medium size can occur at any time below approximately 2200 m. This applies in particular on east, south and west facing steep grassy slopes. Exposed parts of transportation routes are endangered in isolated cases. Caution is to be exercised in areas below glide cracks.

Trend for Thursday and Friday

The weather will be mostly sunny on Thursday, and mostly cloudy with a little snowfall in the north on Friday. The avalanche danger will decrease slowly. Isolated full-depth avalanches are still to be expected.

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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(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

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

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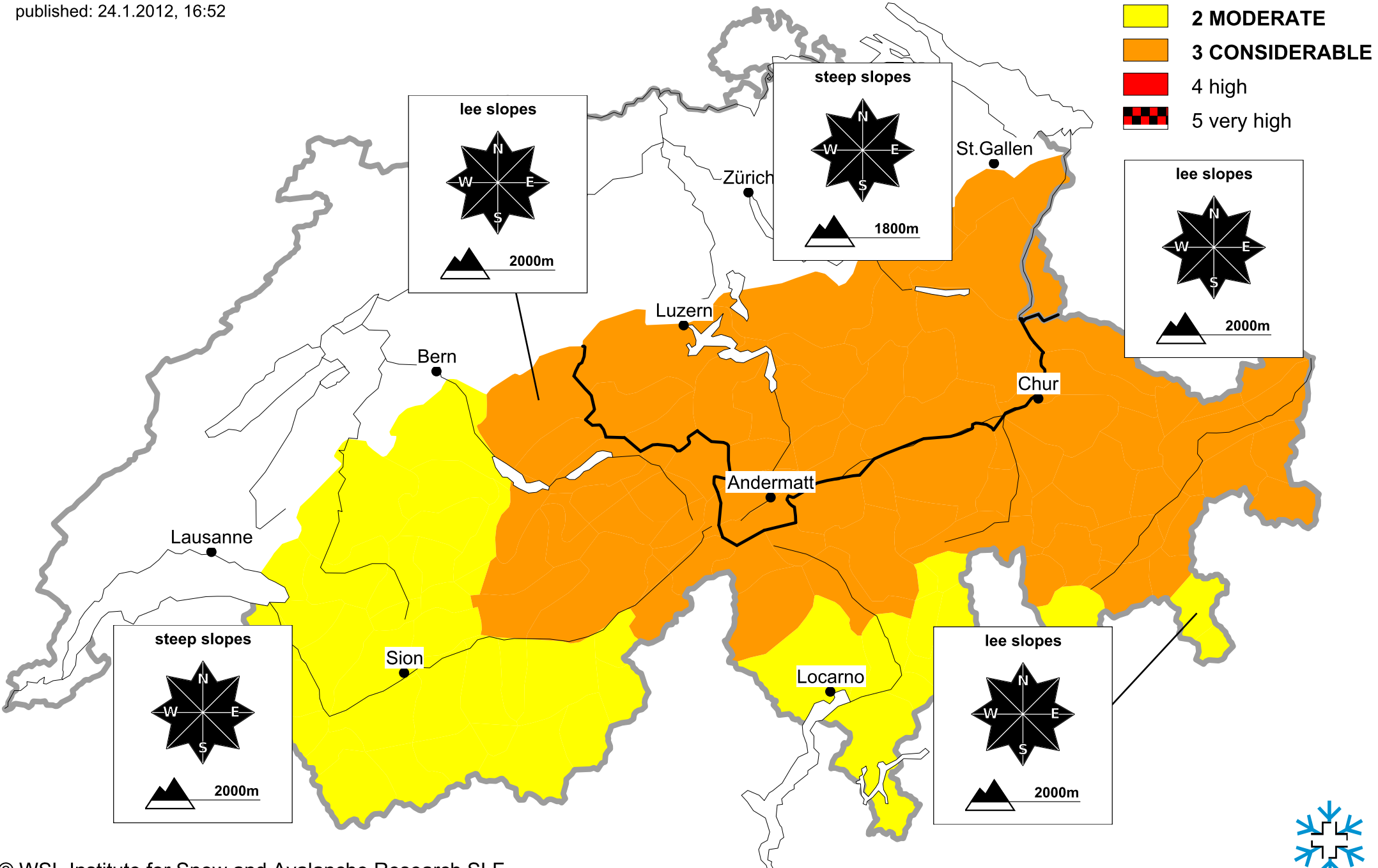
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for Wednesday, 25. January 2012

published: 24.1.2012, 16:52



Avalanche danger forecast

for Wednesday, 25. January 2012

published: 25.1.2012, 07:49

