

National avalanche bulletin no. 71

for Saturday, 4 February 2012

issue date 3.2.2012, 18:30 hours

Considerable avalanche danger in some regions

Current conditions

On Friday it was predominantly sunny above the high fog. Out of the fog there was a few centimeters of snowfall. The wind on the northern flank of the Alps and in the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge was blowing at moderate to strong velocity, elsewhere winds were generally light. The midday temperature at 2000 m was between minus 17 degrees in northern regions and minus 12 degrees in southern regions.

The snow nearest the surface is generally loosely packed and can be easily transported by the wind. The freshly formed snowdrift accumulations were trigger sensitive, but still small sized for the most part. Apart from the weak layers near the uppermost surface, the snowpack is favourably structured in general.

The deep snowpack tends to insulate the ground. The activity of full depth snowslides has diminished somewhat over the last few days, but the slides which were released nonetheless reached up to medium size.

Short-term development

On Saturday it will be rather sunny above the high fog. The midday temperature at 2000 m will be minus 18 degrees in northern regions and minus 14 degrees in southern regions. The wind will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity on the northern flank of the Alps, elsewhere at light to moderate velocity, from the northeast. Additional snowdrift accumulations are expected to form.

Avalanche danger forecast for Saturday

Northern flank of the Alps not including Urseren; northern Ticino; Val Calanca; Val Moesa:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

In the Prealps the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 1600 m. On the remaining northern flank of the Alps the danger zones are found primarily in gullies and bowls in southern to northern to eastern aspects above approximately 2200 m. In northern Ticino as well as in Val Calanca and Val Moesa, the danger zones are found primarily on wind loaded slopes in eastern to southern to western aspects above approximately 1800 m. The snowdrift accumulations will grow in size and frequency as the wind intensifies, in some places reaching medium size. They are prone to triggering and can be released even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. They should be circumvented whenever possible. Whumpfung sounds and shooting cracks are indicators of imminent danger. In outlying terrain away from secured ski runs, experience in evaluating avalanche dangers is essential.

Valais; Urseren; Grisons not including Val Calanca and not including Val Moesa; in addition, central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily in areas adjacent to ridgelines in all aspects above approximately 2200 m; in central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri, above approximately 1800 m. Both the distribution and the size of avalanche prone locations tend to increase with ascending altitude. The freshly formed, relatively small sized snowdrift accumulations can be easily triggered and should be circumvented whenever possible. In addition, triggering an avalanche from more deeply embedded layers of the snowpack is especially possible through large additional loading in places where the snow tends to be relatively shallow. A cautious route selection is imperative.

On the Main Alpine Ridge and northwards therefrom, more than anywhere else, full depth snowslides are possible below about 2400 m on west to south to east facing slopes. These slides can attain medium size. In isolated cases, exposed sections of transportation routes can be placed at risk. Caution is urged below glide cracks in the snowpack.

Trend for Sunday and Monday

On Sunday it will be partly cloudy in southern regions, elsewhere it will be quite sunny in the mountains on both days. It is expected to remain very cold, accompanied by a northwesterly wind. The avalanche danger will decrease only incrementally.

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:

Email: lwp@slf.ch

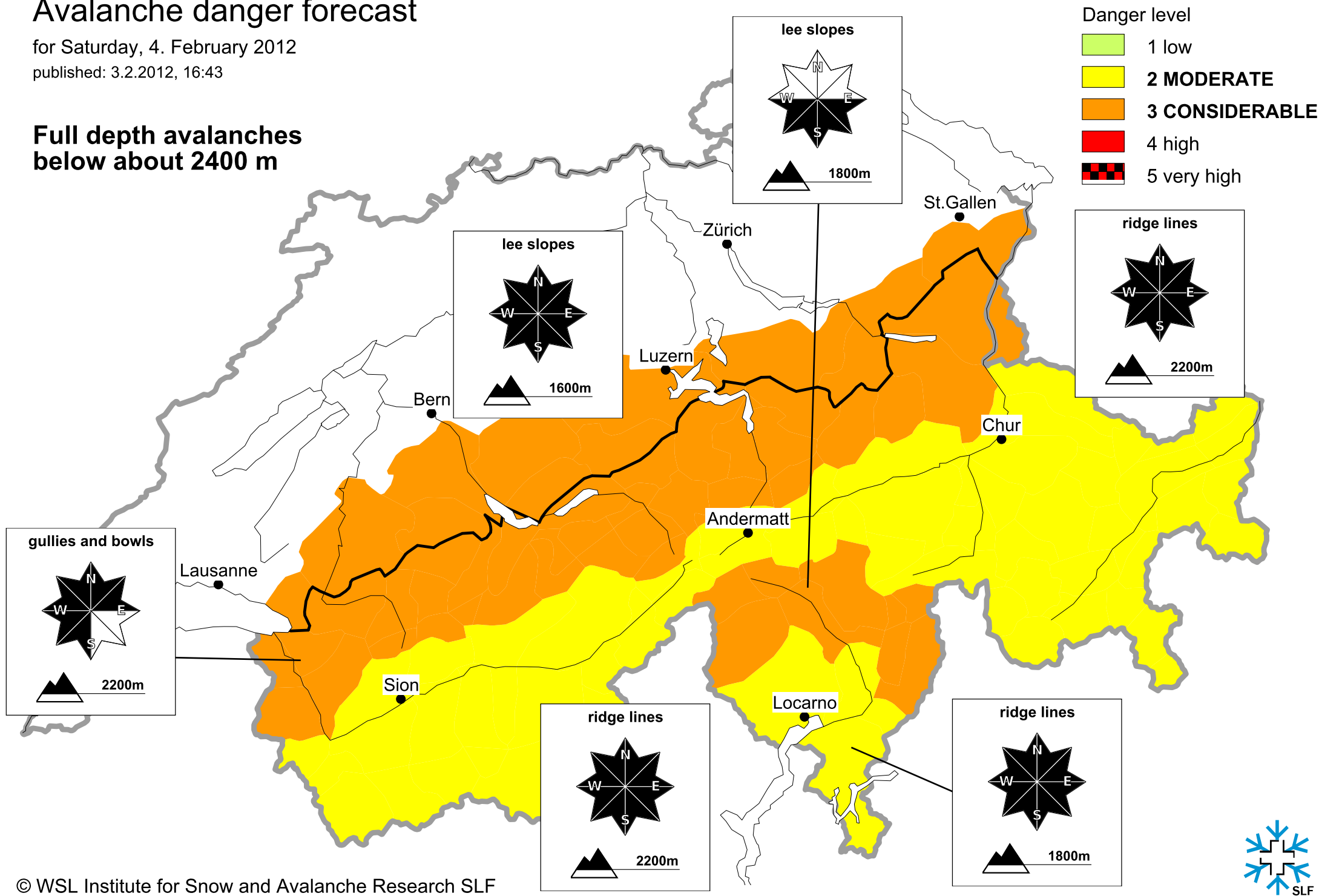
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Avalanche danger forecast

for Saturday, 4. February 2012

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**Full depth avalanches
below about 2400 m**



Avalanche danger forecast

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Full depth avalanches
below about 2400 m

