

National avalanche bulletin no. 72

for Sunday, 5 February 2012

issue date 4.2.2012, 18:30 hours

Primary hazard is snowdrift, considerable avalanche danger in some regions

Current conditions

On Saturday it was predominantly sunny in the Swiss Alps, some cloudbanks were present in Grisons in particular. On the northern flank of the Alps and in the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge, the northeasterly wind was blowing at moderate to strong velocity; intermittently during the night it reached storm strength. In the remaining regions, winds were blowing at light to moderate velocity. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were between minus 20 degrees in northern regions and minus 13 degrees in southern regions.

The snowdrift accumulations of the last few days are prone to triggering. This has been amply demonstrated by several naturally triggered avalanches, as well as avalanches released by backcountry skiers and freeriders. Wherever the wind has exercised no influence during recent days, the snowpack is favourably structured in general.

The deep snowpack tends to insulate the ground. Full depth avalanches which slide from the ground continue to be possible in isolated cases. They can reach up to medium size.

Short-term development

On Sunday it will be generally sunny in the Swiss Alps. In Grisons it will intermittently be slightly overcast. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will lie between minus 14 degrees in western and southern regions and minus 18 degrees in eastern regions. The northeasterly wind will be blowing at moderate velocity, up to strong velocity at times on the northern flank of the Alps in particular.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Northern flank of the Alps; central part of Main Alpine Ridge; southern Simplon region; northern Ticino; Val Calanca; Val Moesa:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in eastern to southern to northern aspects. In the Prealps, in the southern Simplon region, in northern Ticino, in Val Calanca and in Val Moesa, the danger zones are above approximately 1800 m. On the northern flank of the Alps not including the Prealps as well as in the remaining sectors of the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge, the danger zones are above approximately 2400 m.

The more recent snowdrift accumulations can be triggered even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. They should be avoided whenever possible. In some places they are easily recognized. Apart from that, whumpfung sounds and shooting cracks are indicators of imminent danger.

Remaining regions of Valais and Grisons; central Ticino; Sotto Ceneri:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects. In central Ticino and Sotto Ceneri, the danger zones are above approximately 1800 m, elsewhere above approximately 2200 m. Both the distribution and the size of avalanche prone locations tend to increase with ascending altitude. The more recent, relatively shallow snowdrift accumulations can be easily triggered in some places. In general, they are easily discernible and should be evaluated with great care.

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 Monday and Tuesday

On Monday it will be predominantly sunny in the mountains. On Tuesday, it will be generally overcast, accompanied by snow showers in eastern regions in particular. It is expected to remain cold, amidst northeasterly winds. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease incrementally. The danger of full depth snowslides is not expected to change significantly.

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

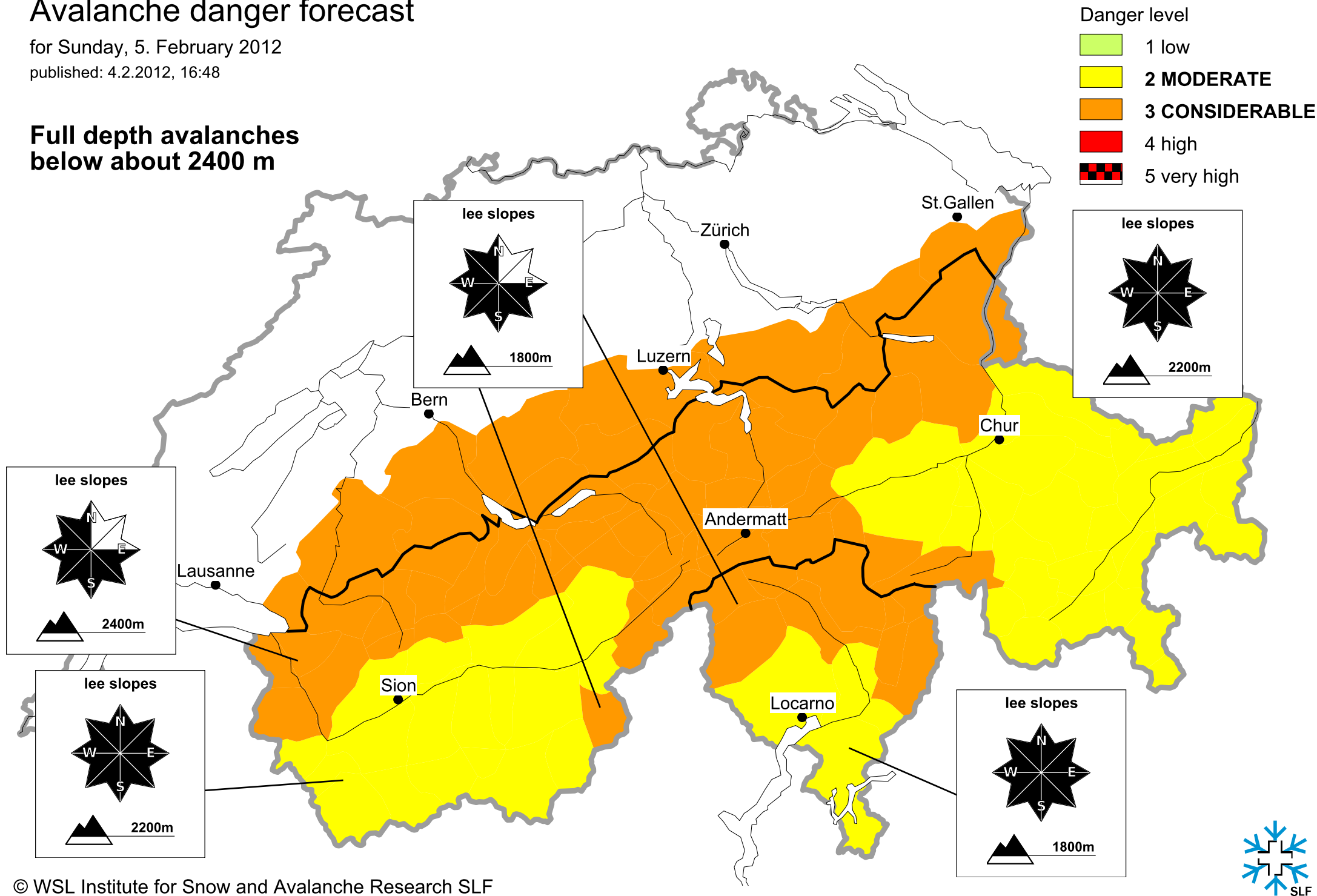
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Avalanche danger forecast

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Full depth avalanches below about 2400 m



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