

National avalanche bulletin no. 109

for Tuesday, 13 March 2012

issue date 12.3.2012, 18:30 hours

Significant increase in avalanche danger in the west during the day

Current conditions

Monday was mostly sunny in the west, and sunny at times in the south and east. Midday temperatures at 2000 m ranged from plus 6 degrees in the west and plus 1 degree in the east to plus 8 degrees in the south. The wind was moderate to strong from the northeast.

Last week's snow drift accumulations are prone to triggering in some places. Their size and prevalence increase with altitude. On steep south facing slopes, a brittle crust has formed on the surface over a wide area. On north facing slopes, the near-surface snow is loosely packed, but adjacent to the ridge line it has been compacted by the wind in most cases. The snowpack is being weakened by the exposure to warming and radiation during the day. The deeper layers of the snowpack are mostly well bonded. In areas with shallow snow cover, however, the snowpack is weakly bonded in some cases. These conditions exist in southern Valais and Grisons in particular. The snowpack is moist all the way through below approximately 2500 m on steep south facing slopes and 1600 m on north facing slopes.

Short-term development

On Monday night the skies will be mostly clear. During the day the weather will be sunny. The wind will be moderate from the northeast. Temperatures will continue to rise from the west. At 2000 m at midday, they will be about plus 7 degrees in the west and south, and about plus 3 degrees in the east.

Avalanche danger forecast for Tuesday

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

Moderate avalanche danger (level 2)

On the northern flank of the Alps and in northern Ticino, Val Calanca and Val Moesa, the avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, on southwest to north to northeast facing wind-loaded slopes, and in areas adjacent to the ridge line and pass areas in all aspects, above approximately 2200 m.

In Valais and Grisons, excluding both the Val Calanca and Val Moesa regions, the avalanche prone locations are to be found, in particular, on southwest to north to northeast facing steep slopes, and in areas adjacent to the ridge line and pass areas in all aspects, above approximately 2600 m.

In all regions subject to this danger level, fresh snow drift accumulations, and those that are a little older, can be released easily in some cases, but they are generally easy to recognise. The size and prevalence of the snow drift accumulations increase with altitude. In the high Alpine regions, the danger is greater. Careful route selection is recommended.

Central and southern Ticino:

Low avalanche danger (level 1)

Isolated avalanche prone locations are still to be found, in particular, in extremely steep terrain. The danger of falling warrants caution.

In all regions, the danger of wet snow and full-depth avalanches will increase during the day. The danger will increase to considerable (level 3) in the western part of the northern flank of the Alps and in Valais, and to moderate (level 2) in the other regions. Natural wet snow and full-depth avalanches are to be expected on east, south and west facing steep slopes below approximately 2600 m in particular. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities are to be concluded early. Isolated full-depth avalanches can also occur during the night and in the morning. Full-depth avalanches can reach medium size and endanger exposed transportation routes. Caution is to be exercised in areas below glide cracks.

Trend for Wednesday and Thursday

Each of the next two days will be sunny and mild. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease. Full-depth avalanche activity will increase a little further. The danger of wet snow avalanches will vary more significantly during the day also in the east.

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)

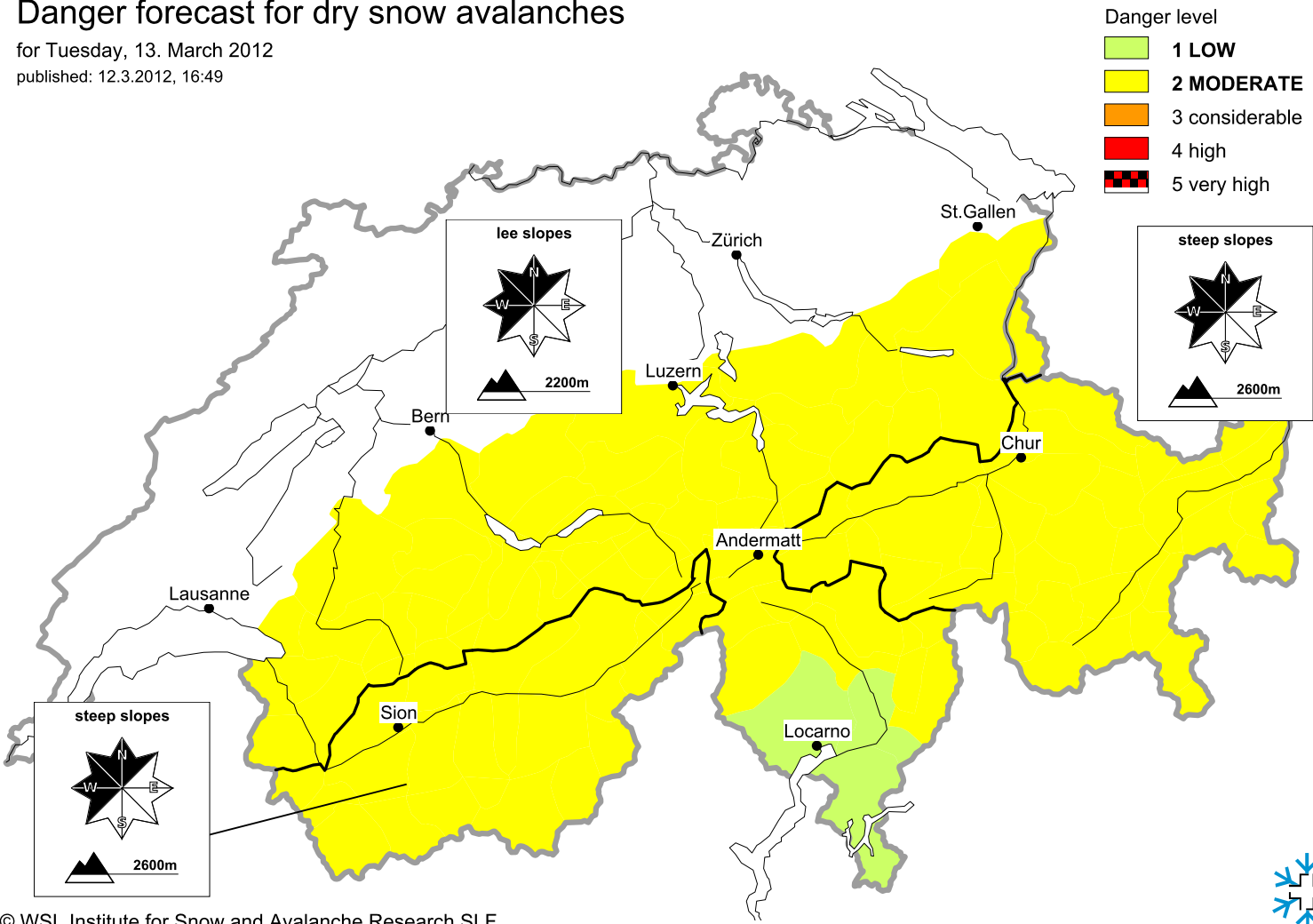
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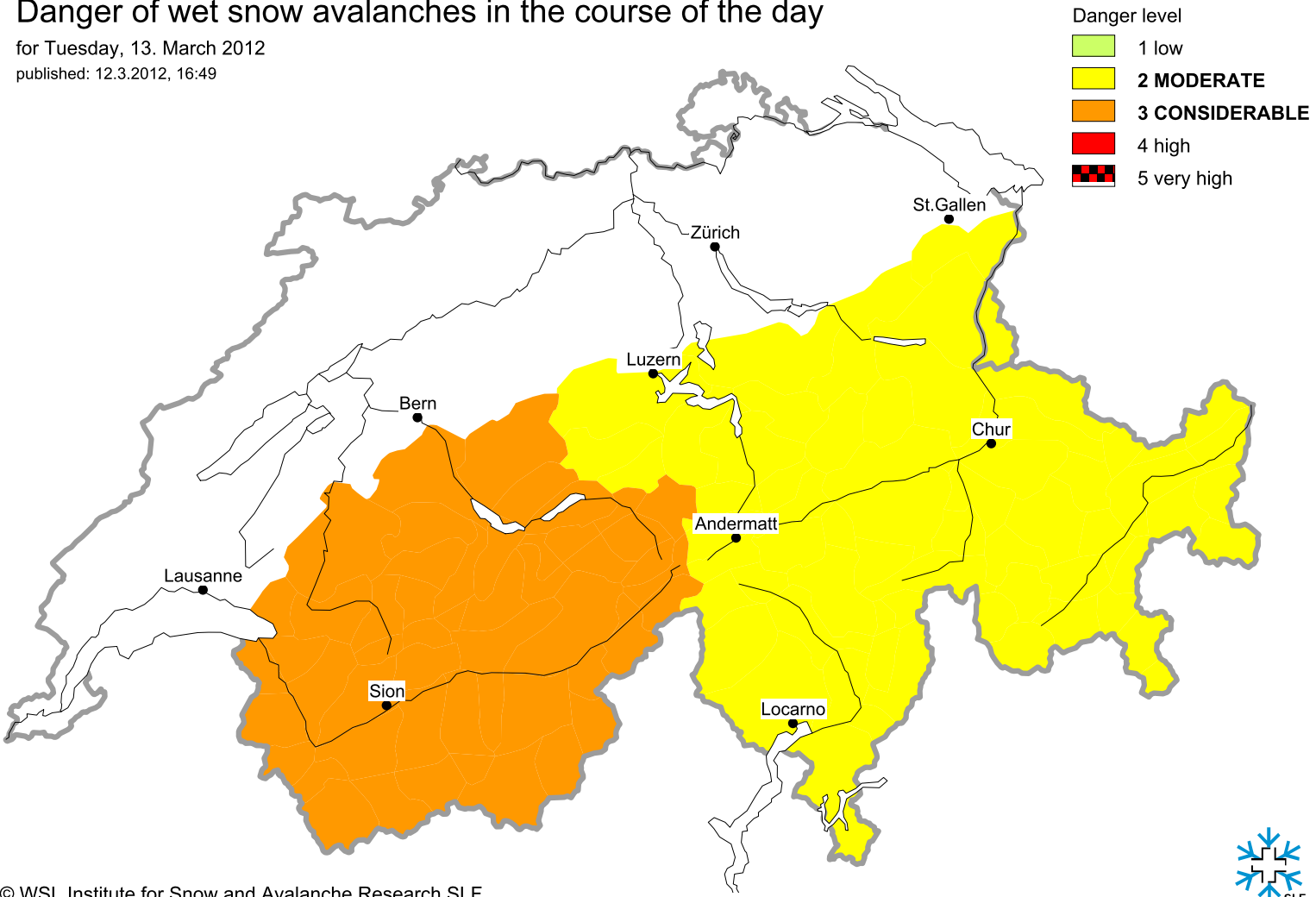
Danger forecast for dry snow avalanches

for Tuesday, 13. March 2012
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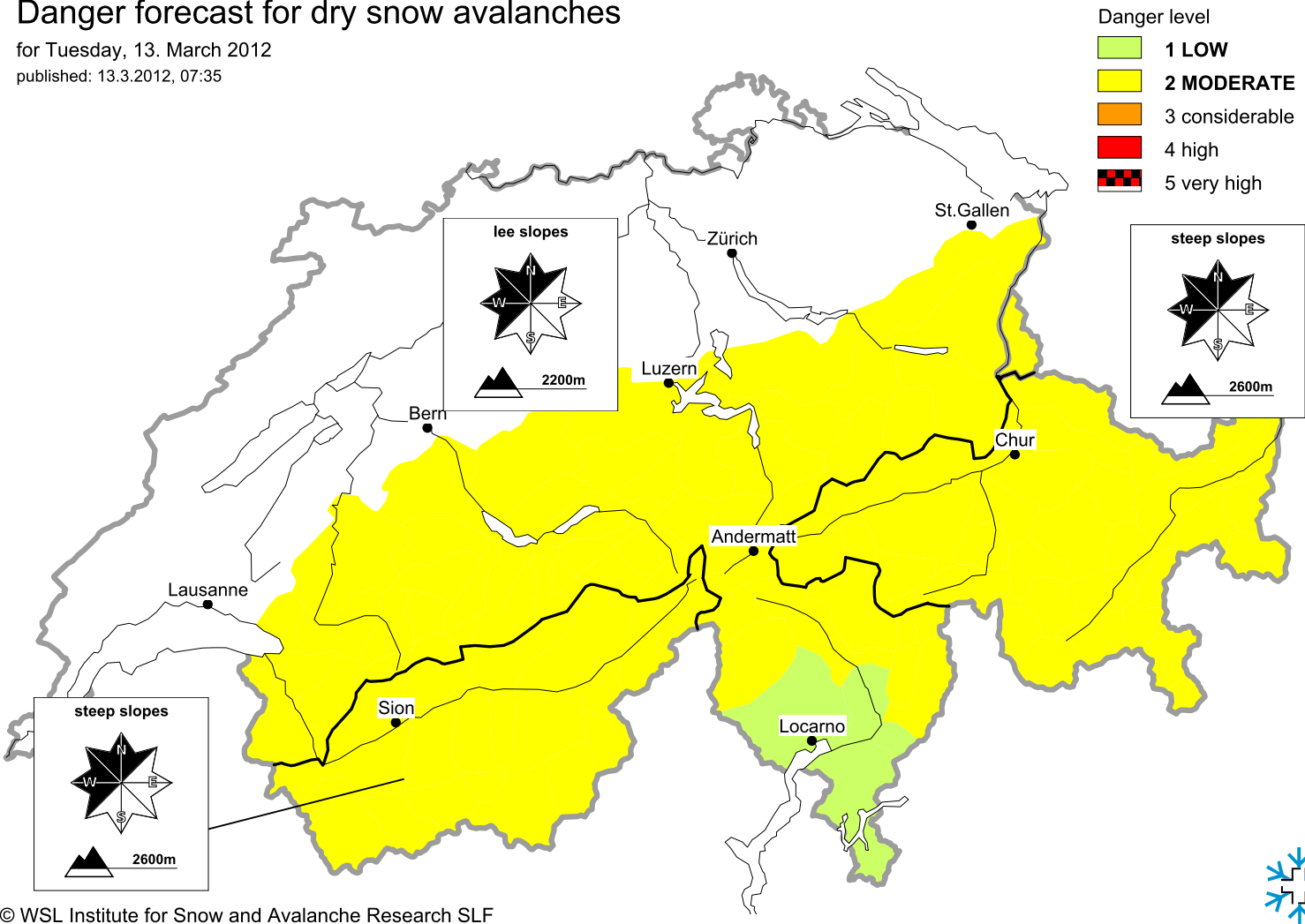
Danger of wet snow avalanches in the course of the day

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Danger forecast for dry snow avalanches

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