

National avalanche bulletin no. 114

for Sunday, 18 March 2012

issue date 17.3.2012, 18:30 hours

Predominantly favourable avalanche situation, caution urged towards fresh snowdrift

Current conditions

Following a night of generally clear skies it was partly sunny in northern regions on Saturday. In southern regions it was overcast and there was a small amount of snowfall. The midday temperatures at 2000 m were between plus 4 degrees in northern regions and zero degrees in southern regions. The wind was blowing at moderate velocity from southerly directions. The snowpack is well consolidated far and wide. In spots where the snow is shallow, however, it is weak in some places. Following clear nights, steep, south facing slopes have a crust capable of bearing loads. On east and west facing slopes, the crust is breakable in some places. On steep, north facing slopes the snowpack surface above approximately 1500 m is often loosely packed, providing a relatively unfavourable base for new fallen snow or snowdrift. On steep, south facing slopes below 2600 to 3000 m, on north facing slopes below about 1500 m, the snowpack is thoroughly wet.

Short-term development

On Saturday night it will be overcast in southern regions, partly clear in northern regions. During the day on Sunday there will still be foehn-induced bright intervals to begin with in northern regions. During the afternoon, clouds will move in and 5 to 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated, except in the northeasternmost regions. In southern regions it will be overcast; by Sunday evening, 15 to 30 cm of fresh fallen snow is expected above approximately 2000 m. The midday temperatures at 2000 m will lie between zero and plus 2 degrees. The wind will be blowing at moderate strength in the Valais, elsewhere at strong velocity, from southwesterly to southerly directions. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations will be generally small sized, except in southern regions.

Avalanche danger forecast for Sunday

Entire region of the Swiss Alps:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

From Saas Fee over the Simplon region into southern Goms as well as in the central part of the southern flank of the Alps, the avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in all aspects above approximately 2200 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations can be triggered by a single backcountry skier or freerider, particularly on north facing slopes. The size and spread of the avalanche prone locations will increase during the course of the day, and also occur more frequently with ascending altitude.

In the remaining regions, the avalanche prone locations are far less widely distributed and are to be found primarily in gullies and bowls of western to northern to eastern aspects. On the northern flank of the Alps and in Grisons not including Val Calanca and Val Moesa, the danger zones are above approximately 2000 m; in the Valais not including the regions of Saas Fee, Simplon and southern Goms, the hazardous zones are above approximately 2600 m. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations are usually small sized. Nonetheless, they can be triggered even by a single person and should be evaluated with great care.

Particularly in the foehn-exposed areas of northern regions, wet slides are possible during the course of the day on south facing slopes below about 2500 m, and on north facing slopes below about 1800 m. In southern regions, due to the rainfall, isolated wet snowslides are possible throughout the day below 1500 m. Isolated full depth avalanches which attain medium size continue to be possible. Caution is urged below glide cracks in the snowpack.

Trend for Monday and Tuesday

On Monday, snowfall, which in some regions will be heavy, is anticipated widespread above approximately 1000 m. On Tuesday it will be sunny in from region to region. The avalanche danger is expected to escalate swiftly on Sunday night.

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>

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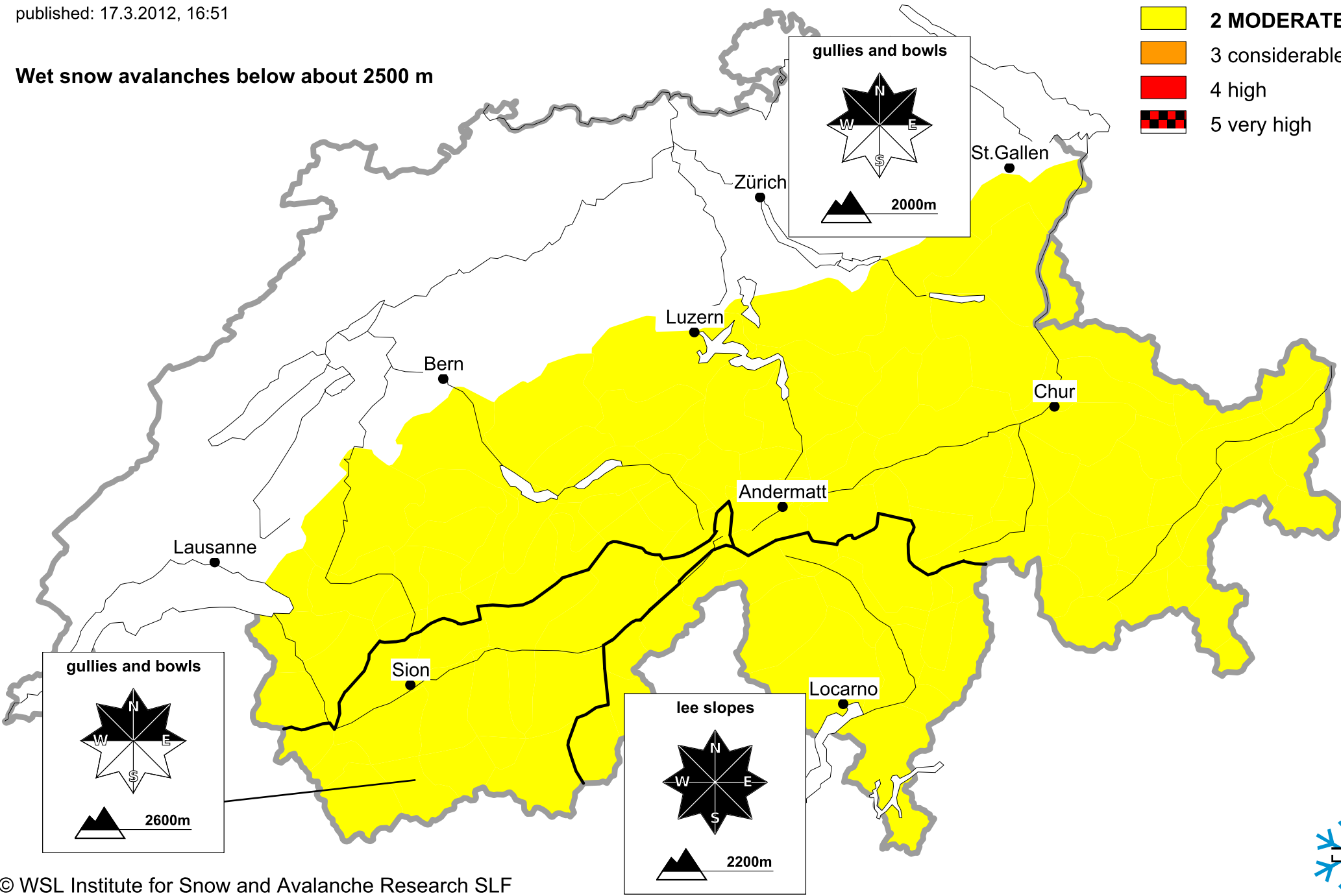
Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 18. March 2012

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Wet snow avalanches below about 2500 m

- Danger level
- 1 low
 - 2 MODERATE**
 - 3 considerable
 - 4 high
 - 5 very high



Avalanche danger forecast

for Sunday, 18. March 2012

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Wet snow avalanches below about 2500 m

- Danger level
- 1 low
 - 2 MODERATE**
 - 3 considerable
 - 4 high
 - 5 very high

