

National avalanche bulletin no. 139

for Thursday, 12 April 2012

issue date 11.4.2012, 18:30 hours

Caution urged towards snowdrift accumulations

Current conditions

On Tuesday night there was snowfall in southern and western regions. During the day on Wednesday it snowed in eastern regions as well. Between Tuesday evening and Wednesday evening above approximately 1500 m there was 15 to 30 cm of new fallen snow widespread, from place to place as much as 40 cm of fresh fallen snow. In the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps there was less. The midday temperature at 2000 m was about minus 4 degrees. The southerly wind was blowing at moderate to strong velocity during the night, then shifted to northwesterly and slackened off to generally light strength during the day. Due to the southerly winds, more than anything else, freshly drifted snow masses accumulated from place to place.

The layers of new fallen and drifted snow of recent days can still be triggered in places on north facing slopes in particular. In southern Valais and in Grisons more than anywhere else, the old snowpack is faceted and weak to some extent on north facing slopes where the snow is relatively shallow.

Short-term development

On Wednesday night in western regions, it will be partly overcast; in eastern regions the skies are expected to clear up. During the day on Thursday, it will be partly sunny in eastern regions, in western and southern regions heavily overcast in general. From the west, snowfall is expected to set in. Between Wednesday evening and Thursday evening above approximately 1300 m in the western and central parts of the northern flank of the Alps as well as in the Lower Valais and the Lower Engadine, 5 to 10 cm of snowfall is anticipated, elsewhere less. The wind will be blowing at light to moderate strength, in high alpine regions intermittently at strong velocity, from the west. The fresh fallen snow will be transported, particularly in areas adjacent to ridgelines and pass areas, as well as in high alpine regions.

Avalanche danger forecast for Thursday

Northern Alpine Ridge west of Susten Pass; southern Simplon region; Main Alpine Ridge from Furka Pass into Val Trupchun as well as regions south thereof; Upper Engadine; Bivio:

Considerable avalanche danger (Level 3)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes. In the indicated regions of the northern Alpine Ridge and the Main Alpine Ridge, as well as in the region of Bivio, in the Upper Engadine and in Val Poschiavo, the danger zones are found in western to northern to southern aspects above approximately 2500 m. In the regions south of the central part of the Main Alpine Ridge as well as in the southern Simplon region, the hazardous zones are found in all aspects above approximately 2200 m. Special caution is urged towards freshly formed, but also towards older accumulations of drifted snow which in some cases have been blanketed by new fallen snow. They occur especially frequently in areas adjacent to ridgelines and in pass areas, as well as in high alpine regions. They can be triggered as avalanches even by a single backcountry skier or freerider. Experience in evaluating avalanche hazards is necessary.

Remaining regions of the northern flank of the Alps, of the Valais and of Grisons:

Moderate avalanche danger (Level 2)

The avalanche prone locations are to be found primarily on wind loaded slopes in western to northern to southern aspects. In the Prealps, the danger zones are found above approximately 2000 m, elsewhere above approximately 2200 m. The somewhat older snowdrift accumulations which are discernible only with difficulty can in some cases be triggered as avalanches even by a single backcountry skier or freerider, although the snow masses which are released generally remain small sized. A cautious route selection is recommended. In high alpine regions the avalanche danger level must be categorized as higher. Freshly formed snowdrift accumulations should be avoided whenever possible.

In western and northern regions, isolated full depth snowslides are possible below about 2200 m, particularly on north facing slopes which have not yet discharged.

Trend for Friday and Saturday

On Friday and Saturday, it will be heavily overcast far and wide. Intermittent snowfall above approximately 1500 m is anticipated. The avalanche danger 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)

Weather Information in collaboration with MeteoSwiss

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:

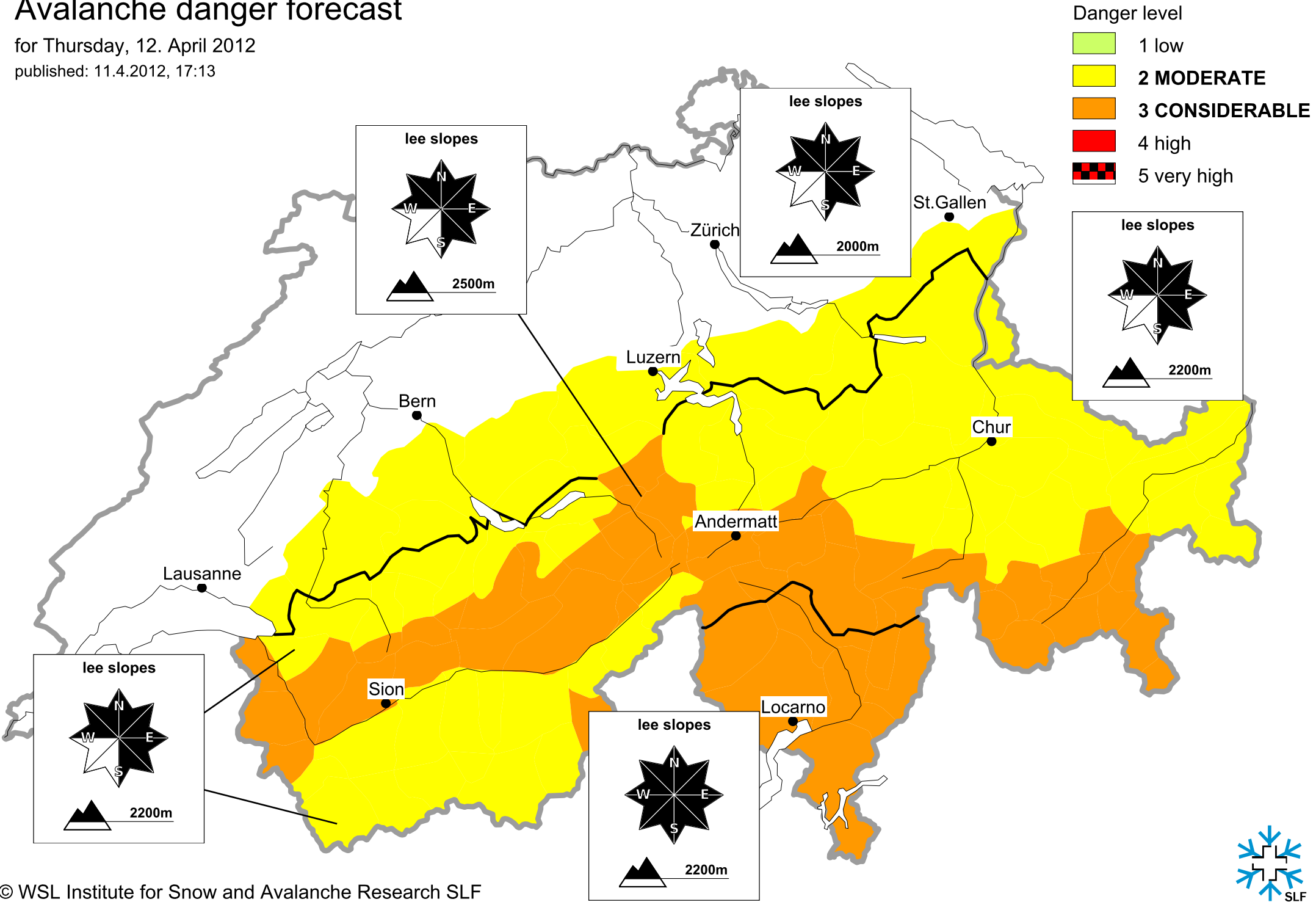
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