



The new central terminal building at OR Tambo International Airport.

Still 355 000 cup tickets for sale

WORLD Cup organisers still have 355 000 tickets to sell in the eight weeks leading up to the tournament.

Officials will be relieved that 145 000 match tickets were sold in the first four days of the final sales phase, but more sales are needed if Fifa, the sport's world body, is to avoid the spectacle of empty seats.

Organisers have been forced to offer cheaper tickets to ensure all 10 World Cup stadiums – not just those staging the most popular games – are full.

"I think there is one challenge we have to work on," Fifa secretary general Jerome Valcke said ahead of the fifth and final ticket phase. "It's to make sure all the stadiums are full and that we sell all the tickets."

The final ticket push will not



have that much of an effect on Fifa's bulging coffers, considering the \$3.3 billion it will get from commercial rights and official marketing.

Valcke recently said there were no financial problems with the cup in South Africa. But what of Danny Jordaan's Local Organising Committee and South Africa?

Match tickets are a "key revenue stream" for the local organisers, according to Udesch Pillay of the Pre-

toria-based Human Sciences Research Council.

Pillay is editor of Development and Dreams, The Urban Legacy of the 2010 Football World Cup, the result of a five-year study of the long-term impact of the World Cup.

He notes that the local organising committee for Germany's World Cup in 2006 made a profit of \$237.5 million, "partly due to near-capacity sales of match tickets".

South Africa 2010, because of various factors, might not be able to maximise this revenue stream as other hosts have done.

Sluggish ticket sales are one thing. But of the tickets sold, many have been to poor South African fans at discounted rates – and that further reduces the organisers' profit margins. – Sapa-AP



Transport Minister Sibusiso Ndebele, left, shakes hands with President Jacob Zuma during the opening of a new central terminal building at OR Tambo International Airport.

PICTURES: REUTERS

