

**From:** TBCSA User [mailto:kagiso@tbcsa.travel]

**Sent:** 23 February 2010 10:16 PM

**Subject:** Tourism sector adamant that South African World Cup pricing remains competitive



NAVIGATE



[About Us](#)

[Contact Details](#)



South Africa News

### Tourism sector adamant that South African World Cup pricing remains competitive

*The Tourism Business Council of South Africa has released a statement asserting that South Africa is ready to host the Fifa 2010 World Cup and refuting media reports that suggest tourism products and services are over-priced ahead of the tournament.*

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) addressed the issue of price gouging – the practice of unfairly raising prices for the duration of an event – in a press conference in Sandton today (February 23), saying that the majority of South African businesses will be responsible in their pricing.

"We are in the business of pursuing profit, but we will do so with a conscience," said Mmatšatši Marobe, CEO of TBCSA. "The message from the TBCSA, its member associations and partners, against excessive pricing for tourism products and services, has been consistent and we believe the majority of businesses have heeded the call."

She went on to say that while sporadic incidences of price inflation have occurred, TBCSA and its members recognise the long-term benefits of sustainable growth in visitor numbers and tourist expenditure. The period of the World Cup will be treated as a peak season, as is common for World Cup host countries.

Across all segments of the tourism industry the TBCSA is confident that its members have the capacity to welcome the numbers of international travellers who will visit South Africa during the World Cup.

"There is, without doubt, sufficient room across the country to accommodate the requirements of the fans expected for the tournament," stated Brett Dungan, CEO of the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa, a TBCSA member.

The Council acknowledged certain issues that make South Africa an expensive World Cup destination, and outlined measures that have been put in place to reduce these expenses as much as possible.

"The nearest country to have qualified for the World Cup is Cameroon," said Jaime Byrom, Executive Chairman of MATCH Hospitality AG, Fifa's hospitality partner. "The distances to travel for most visitors are long, and in almost every case, they will need to travel by air, which is expensive. Once in South Africa, there are additional expenses. It is not fair to compare someone in Manchester getting to Berlin to watch a game to someone from Manchester getting to Rustenburg in South Africa."

Michael Tatalias, CEO of the Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA), concurred. "South Africa is a long-haul destination," he said. "People can't just drive over on the ferry, watch a game and sleep in their cars. The value equation has changed, but consumers are not stupid. If prices are too high for the value that they get, they are simply not going to travel."

To address these issues, MATCH has made it possible for football fans to book only accommodation through their website, rather than entire travel packages. In addition, for the first time, MATCH has permitted the grading and participation of guesthouses as part of their accommodation offering. They are also offering packages through more than one preferred tourism operator in each country, all of which contributes to making it possible for fans to book competitive packages to suit their specific budgets.

Although the recent Competition Commission enquiry into price fixing among South African airlines is drawing bad publicity, SATSA and its members say that it is positive that Government is willing to step in where the possibility arises that the consumer is being treated unfairly.

"Government has shown that is willing to look after the interests of the consumer," said SATSA's Tatalias. "In addition, in their investigation into the alleged airline price fixing, I don't think that they're going to find anything."

The overall message from TBCSA and its member partners was that the global public and the media should assess pricing and readiness reports as part of a bigger picture, rather than focusing on stories about isolated incidents of price increases and infrastructure setbacks.

"Once they've been here and experienced South African hospitality first hand, they'll know for the future," said MATCH's Byrom. "There is only one World Cup happening in 2010, and people won't be disappointed."

In conclusion, TBCSA's Marobe affirmed South Africa's readiness to host the 2010 Fifa World Cup. "As organised business in the tourism sector, we stand firmly behind the 2010 Local Organising Committee and Fifa and Government in ensuring that South Africa delivers the best World Cup ever. Our industry is maturing and the majority of its role-players, by far, realise the enormous potential that this mega event holds. The effect will be felt for many years to come, long after we've delivered a great World Cup. This is the real value we need to focus and capitalise on – the long-term image boost through actual visitors and the accumulative TV audience which is a few billion viewers.

"Ke Nako! The time is right."  
//Ends

