

St. Petersburg's Over-Budget World Cup Stadium Needs Another \$33M

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St. Petersburg's Zenit Stadium will need another 2 billion rubles (\$33.4 million) if it is to meet international standards in time for the 2018 World Cup, Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko announced on Thursday.

The former sports minister said that the stadium on Krestovsky Island is currently only suitable for “domestic championship matches,” the Fontanka news outlet reported.

He said that the stadium still requires additional security, entry area for cars and buses, an expanded press area and VIP section, and at least thirty cameras to ensure full television coverage.

“These things aren't budgeted into a civil construction project,” he said. “With all things considered, we will need another 1.5 to 2 billion rubles to adapt the stadium.”

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Mutko said that the financial burden would not fall solely on the Russian budget, and that FIFA and St. Petersburg's Zenit football club would co-finance the changes.

The 69,000-capacity arena in St. Petersburg has been under construction since 2007. The stadium has consistently been behind-schedule and over-budget. The project's current budget of 39.2 billion rubles (\$605 million) is already over five times original estimates, the TASS news agency reported in July 2016.

The stadium is set to host the Confederations Cup in the summer of 2017.

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