

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

Equinor ASA v. Garry Mall  
Case No. D2025-2995

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is Equinor ASA, Norway, represented by Valea AB trading as Rouse AB, Sweden.

The Respondent is Garry Mall, Nigeria.

### **2. The Domain Name and Registrar**

The disputed domain name <equinorjobs.com> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

### **3. Procedural History**

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on July 26, 2025. On July 28, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On July 28, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (N/A) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 29, 2025, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on August 1, 2025.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendment to the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on August 5, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was August 25, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on August 26, 2025.

The Center appointed Michael A. Albert as the sole panelist in this matter on August 29, 2025. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

#### 4. Factual Background

Equinor ASA is a Norwegian corporation, formerly known as Statoil ASA. Equinor ASA is a broad international energy company with operations in more than 30 countries around the world developing oil, gas, wind and solar energy.

Statoil has grown along with the emergence of the Norwegian oil and gas industry dating back to the late 1960s. It was founded as The Norwegian State Oil Company (Statoil) in 1972 and the Norwegian State holds 67% of the shares. By virtue of Complainant's long use and the renown of the Statoil name, the STATOIL trademark has developed a reputation and appears to be well known within its field of business. Statoil ASA changed its name to Equinor in 2018. The news was widely shared and commented worldwide on media platforms.

EQUINOR trademarks have been registered worldwide. Examples of EQUINOR marks are listed below. Furthermore, the Complainant is the owner of more than 100 domain name registrations throughout the world containing the EQUINOR mark distributed among generic Top-Level Domains ("gTLD") and country code Top-Level Domains ("ccTLDs").

Jurisdiction	Title	Registration No.	Registration Date
United States of America	EQUINOR	6,436,681	August 3, 2021
European Union	EQUINOR	17900772	January 18, 2019
United Kingdom	EQUINOR	UK00917900772	January 18, 2019

#### 5. Parties' Contentions

##### A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name <equinorjobs.com> is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark EQUINOR as the disputed domain name incorporates the entire EQUINOR mark. The disputed domain name adds only the generic word "jobs". The Complainant notes that the addition of a generic word does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element, WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 1.8.

The Respondent has no rights to, or legitimate interests in respect of, the disputed domain name in view of the Complainant's longstanding prior use of its trademark EQUINOR and company name Equinor. The Respondent is not affiliated with or related to the Complainant in any way, or licensed or otherwise authorized to use the EQUINOR mark in connection with a website, a domain name or for any other purpose. The Respondent is not using the domain name in connection with any legitimate noncommercial or fair use without intent for commercial gain, is not generally known by the disputed domain name and has not acquired any trademark or service mark rights in that name or mark. The Complainant further submits that the Respondent is not using the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services.

The Respondent has intentionally registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith. The Respondent was undoubtedly aware of the fact that it incorporated a well-recognized and distinctive trademark in which the Respondent had no prior rights. The Respondent's registration also appears to have been used for phishing emails. The Complainant has been contacted by a third party who received a fake job offer. The fake job offer appears to come from the Complainant's own employee, whose name was used in the email communication. The contacted individual became suspicious of the received email and contacted the Complainant directly who confirmed that the job offer was illegitimate. The Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name, incorporating the Complainant's mark, indicates that the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract Internet traffic, for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark EQUINOR.

## **B. Respondent**

The Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

## **6. Discussion and Findings**

### **A. Identical or Confusingly Similar**

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

Here, the Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1. The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7. The Panel finds that the addition of the word "jobs" does not prevent a finding of the confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

### **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Further, Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, the claimed phishing (which Respondent has not rebutted), can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

### **C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith**

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent adopted a domain name that is clearly confusingly similar to the Complainant's, offering no justification for having done so. It is highly implausible that the Respondent would have come up with the disputed domain name without having deliberately intended to reference Complainant's registered mark. Accordingly, the Panel finds that Respondent intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark.

Moreover, the record reflects evidence that the Respondent has used the disputed domain name to impersonate an Equinor employee and send fake Equinor job hiring emails to potential job applicants. The Respondent offers no rebuttal or counterargument in response to this evidence. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

### **7. Decision**

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <equinorjobs.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Michael A. Albert/*

**Michael A. Albert**

Sole Panelist

Date: September 15, 2025