

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sopra Steria Group v. Latif Burak

Case No. D2026-0480

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sopra Steria Group, France, represented by Fidal, France.

The Respondent is Latif Burak, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <soprasteria-careers.com> is registered with Hosting Concepts B.V. d/b/a Registrar.eu. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 4, 2026. On February 5, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On February 6, 2026, 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 (Whois Privacy Protection Foundation) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 9, 2026, 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 amended Complaint on February 12, 2026. ¹

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended 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”).

¹The Complainant removed one domain name from the Complaint upon receipt of the Center’s notice of multiple underlying registrants.

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on February 17, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 9, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on March 11, 2026.

The Center appointed Jon Lang as the sole panelist in this matter on March 18, 2026. 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

The Complainant is a French company founded in 1968, specialising in IT consulting, digital services and software development. It is widely recognized in the technology and IT sector for its long-standing presence, scale of operations, and expertise, and enjoys a strong reputation among business partners, clients and Internet users. It is the owner of numerous SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA and STERIA trademarks (together the "SOPRA STERIA Marks") in various jurisdictions, including European Union trademark No. 013623889, for SOPRA STERIA (figurative/device) registered on May 15, 2015; International trademark No.1163226, for SOPRA registered on April 8, 2013; and European Union trademark No.003803061 for STERIA, registered on September 26, 2005. The Complainant owns and holds rights in the French corporate name of the Complainant, "sopra steria group", and owns more than 400 domain names containing SOPRA STERIA, including <sopra-steria.com> (since April 11, 2014) and <soprasteria.fr> (since April 15, 2014). The Complainant also owns domain names which include SOPRA STERIA combined with descriptive terms, some relating to recruitment such as <soprasteriahr.com>, and <soprasteriarecruitment.com>. The Complainant operates its official recruitment websites at the subdomains <careers.soprasteria.com> and <careers.soprasteria.fr>, which are used respectively for its English-language and French-language career and recruitment activities.

The disputed domain name, <soprasteria-careers.com> (hereafter the Domain Name), was registered on November 19, 2025. At the time the Complainant became aware of the Domain Name in December 2025, it resolved to an active website imitating and reproducing the Complainant's official website, including its visual identity and trademarks. The Domain Name is currently inactive.

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. The following is a summary of its main contentions.

The Complainant contends that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA Marks. It is composed of the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks in whole, combined with the descriptive term "careers", followed by the generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) ".com". The SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks are clearly recognizable within the Domain Name. The addition of the term "careers" is secondary and descriptive, directly relates to the Complainant's recruitment activities and does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity. Nor does the presence of a hyphen between "soprasteria" and "careers". Furthermore, the likelihood of confusion is increased by the fact that the Complainant operates its official recruitment websites at the subdomains <careers.soprasteria.com> and <careers.soprasteria.fr>.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name. The Complainant does not know the Respondent and has not authorised the Respondent to register the Domain Name. To the Complainant's best knowledge, the Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant in any way. The Complainant exploits its trademarks directly and only authorizes third parties to use them under strict contractual arrangements, such as license or partnership agreements. The Respondent's use of the Domain Name cannot be considered legitimate or bona fide, as it could mislead Internet users into believing that the website to which it resolved was operated by or affiliated with the Complainant. During the period when the Respondent's website was active, it is highly conceivable that Internet users may have believed that they were on the Complainant's official website. By reproducing the SOPRA STERIA Marks, as well as the look and feel of the Complainant's official website, Internet users may have applied for a job or written to obtain information and thereby provided confidential information. The Respondent's website may therefore have been used for phishing or for fraudulent purposes, which would be extremely damaging not only to the Complainant, but also to Internet users. Whilst the Domain Name is currently inactive, such passive holding does not confer any rights or legitimate interests on the Respondent, particularly in circumstances where the Respondent is not authorised to use the Complainant's trademarks and the nature of previous use to which the Domain Name has been put.

Finally, the Complainant contends that the Domain Name was registered and used in bad faith.

- Given the Complainant's long-standing use of the SOPRA STERIA Marks beginning well before the registration of the Domain Name and their distinctiveness and reputation, it is not conceivable that the Respondent registered the Domain Name without knowledge of the Complainant;
- The circumstances indicate that the Respondent deliberately targeted the Complainant's trademarks - the Domain Name reproduces the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA Marks, and is similar to the Complainant's domain names such as <soprasteria.com> and <sopra-steria.com>, the Complainant's company name and subdomains <careers.soprasteria.com> and <careers.soprasteria.fr>;
- The Domain Name will be seen as relating to the official website for the Complainant's recruitment. The likelihood of confusion is further reinforced by the fact that the Complainant operates its official recruitment websites at the subdomains <careers.soprasteria.com> and <careers.soprasteria.fr>;
- Whilst the Domain Name is now inactive, non-use of a domain name would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding;
- Given the Complainant operates its official recruitment and human resources platforms through dedicated websites, including subdomains <careers.soprasteria.com> and <careers.soprasteria.fr>, registration of the Domain Name was for the purpose of preventing the Complainant from reflecting its SOPRA STERIA Marks in a corresponding domain name;
- Registration of the Domain Name and its past use constitutes a clear case of cybersquatting. The only plausible explanation for the Respondent's conduct is the intention to take unfair advantage of the reputation of the Complainant's trademarks by creating confusion among Internet users and a desire to disrupt the Complainant's relationship with its actual or potential customers, or to attempt to attract Internet users for its own commercial gains;
- The addition of the descriptive term "careers" to the SOPRA STERIA Marks in the Domain Name, demonstrates that the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademarks as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website;
- When the Domain Name was active, it resolved to a website reproducing and imitating the Complainant's official recruitment website, including its overall layout and visual identity, thereby creating the false impression that the website was operated by, or affiliated with the Complainant, e.g., as one of its official recruitment platforms. Such use was liable to mislead Internet users, particularly job applicants and potential employees, who may have been encouraged to interact with the website and provide personal data, such as identity details, contact information and professional information. Such use is illegitimate and potentially harmful not only to the Complainant, but also to the public and further supports a finding that the Domain Name was registered and used in bad faith;

- By adopting a domain name combining the SOPRA STERIA Marks with the term “careers” and using it to host a website imitating the Complainant’s official recruitment platform, the Respondent sought to exploit the trust associated with the Complainant’s trademarks to attract Internet users, conduct which is characteristic of cybersquatting.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant’s contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires a complainant to prove: (i) that a respondent has registered a domain name which is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which a complainant has rights; (ii) that the respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the domain name; and (iii) that the domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith. A complainant must prove each of these three elements to succeed.

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 Domain Name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions (“[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)”), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

Each of the SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks are reproduced within the Domain Name albeit with the addition of the word “careers” appearing after “soprasteria” with a hyphen separating the two elements of the Domain Name. Given that hyphens (along with other minor variations) are regarded as irrelevant for the purposes of the first element of the three part test under the Policy, and that for the purposes of comparison, the gTLD, “.com”, may be ignored, the Panel finds that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the SOPRA STERIA Marks for the purposes of the Policy.

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 3.1](#), section 2.1.

A respondent can show it has rights to or legitimate interests in a domain name in various ways even where, as is the case here, it is not licensed by or affiliated with a complainant. For instance, it can show that it has been commonly known by the domain name or that it is making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the domain name without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service

mark at issue. Here, however, the Respondent is not known by the Domain Name, and given the nature of the website to which the Domain Name once resolved as described earlier, it cannot be said that there is (or was) legitimate noncommercial use. As to an absence of an intent to mislead (for commercial gain), the Respondent's choice of Domain Name and the use to which it has been put, namely to point to a website which imitated and reproduced the Complainant's official website and which used the SOPRA STERIA Marks, suggests the very opposite. In these circumstances, "use" could not be regarded as fair either.

A respondent can also show that it is using a domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. However, it seems clear that the Respondent set out to acquire a domain name that would create a misleading impression of association with the Complainant, which has then been used to resolve to a copycat website. In these circumstances, it would be difficult to accept that such use could amount to a bona fide offering of goods or services, or any other bona fide use, for the purposes of the Policy.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, claimed as applicable to this case: copycat sites or passing off, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds that the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie case. In fact, the Respondent has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name, or indeed any evidence at all.

In all the circumstances, the Panel finds that the Complainant has fulfilled the requirements of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy, the second element.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.2.1.

The Respondent must have been aware of the Complainant and the SOPRA STERIA Marks at the time of registration of the Domain Name given its formulation and the use to which it was put.

One way a complainant may demonstrate bad faith registration and use (as set out in paragraph 4(b)) is to show that a respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with a complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation or endorsement of its website or of products or services on it.

The purpose behind registration of the Domain Name was to attract Internet users to the Respondent's copycat website which misused the Complainant's trademarks and impersonated the Complainant. In other words, the circumstances envisaged above.

Moreover, panels have held that use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, claimed as applicable to this case: phishing (which may be the purpose behind the Respondent's registration of the Domain Name), copycat sites or passing off, constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4.

The fact that the Domain Name no longer resolves to a copycat website does not preclude a finding against the Respondent. Panels may take into account the totality of circumstances in reaching their decisions and the fact of improper past use combined with other factors such as the implausibility of any good faith use, leaves little doubt that a finding against the Respondent should be made in this case.

The Panel finds that, for the purposes of the Policy, there is evidence of both registration and use of the Domain Name in bad faith and that therefore the third element of the Policy has been established.

7. Decision

For all the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the Domain Name <soprasteria-careers.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Jon Lang/

Jon Lang

Sole Panelist

Date: April 1, 2026