

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Serco Group Plc v. Name Redacted¹

Case No. D2025-3541

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Serco Group Plc, United Kingdom, represented by SafeNames Ltd., United Kingdom ("UK").

The Respondent is Name Redacted

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <serco-groupplc.com> is registered with Tucows Domains Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on September 2, 2025. On September 2, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On September 2, 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 (Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0174215563) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 4, 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 amended Complaint on September 5, 2025.

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").

¹ The Respondent appears to have used the name of a third party when registering the disputed domain name. In light of the potential identity theft, the Panel has redacted the Respondent's name from this decision. However, the Panel has attached as Annex 1 to this decision an instruction to the Registrar regarding transfer of the disputed domain name, which includes the name of the Respondent. The Panel has authorized the Center to transmit Annex 1 to the Registrar as part of the order in this proceeding, and has indicated Annex 1 to this decision shall not be published due to the exceptional circumstances of this case. See *Banco Bradesco S.A. v. FAST-12785241 Attn. Bradescourgente.net / Name Redacted*, WIPO Case No. [D2009-1788](#).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on September 9, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 29, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on September 30, 2025.

The Center appointed Catherine Slater as the sole panelist in this matter on October 8, 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

The Complainant is a services provision company headquartered in the UK. It predominantly operates in the areas of transport, justice and immigration, health, defence and citizen services. It was initially founded under the name RCA Services Limited, a UK division of the Radio Corporation of America, and re-branded as "SERCO" in 1987. The Complainant has been listed on the London Stock Exchange since 1988. It is a Financial Times Stock Exchange ("FTSE") 350 company with total revenue, in 2023, of GBP 4.9 billion. By 2023, it managed over 500 contracts in over 20 countries and employed over 50,000 people.

The Complainant has a portfolio of registrations for the SERCO trademark ("the Complainant's trademark"), including:

- United States Trademark Registration No. 2932258 for SERCO (plain word mark) registered on March 15, 2005;
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 000201798 for SERCO (plain word mark) registered on August 19, 1999; and
- Australian Trademark Registration No. 892338 for SERCO (plain word mark) registered October 14, 2001.

The Complainant has operated its website at "www.serco.com" since 1994.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain name on February 25, 2025.

On April 9, 2025, the Complainant sent the Respondent a cease-and-desist letter. No response was received.

At the date of filing the Complaint, the disputed domain name resolved to a holding webpage provided by the hosting service. At the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name does not resolve to any webpage.

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 is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark because the disputed domain name consists of that trademark appended by the term "groupplc" which is the Complainant's company name.

The Complainant further contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name because the Respondent does not have any rights (either registered or unregistered) to any of the terms contained in the disputed domain name, the Complainant has not provided any

authorization to the Respondent to use the Complainant's trademark in any domain name, the disputed domain name has not been used for any bona fide offering of goods or services, the Respondent is not commonly known by the term SERCO, the use of the disputed domain name is not a legitimate noncommercial or fair use and there is no plausible reason for the registration and use of the disputed domain name other than to take advantage of the goodwill and reputation attached to the Complainant's trademark.

The Complainant further contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith because the mere registration of the disputed domain name that is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark that is widely-known creates by itself a presumption of bad faith, the registration has been done to take advantage of the Complainant's goodwill and reputation, the failure to respond to the cease-and-desist letter infers bad faith behaviour, and because passive use does not preclude a finding of bad faith use in circumstances where the Complainant's trademark is distinctive, the Respondent has concealed its identity by using the name of one of the Complainant's previous company officers and the failure of the Respondent to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good faith use of the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the 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 of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), 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.

Although the addition of other terms here, "-groupplc", may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

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

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.

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

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 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

The Complainant has established that the Complainant's trademark is distinctive and well known worldwide. The Respondent has provided no explanation for its registration of the disputed domain name, which the Panel finds to be likely to be understood by Internet users as referring to the Complainant. The Panel infers in the circumstances, and in particular the imitation of the Complainant's company name in the disputed domain name and the use of a Complainant's previous officer's name as Registrant, that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name with the Complainant and the Complainant's trademark in mind, and with the intention of deriving unfair commercial advantage from the goodwill attaching to that trademark.

The Panel finds the disputed domain name to be inherently misleading, as inevitably suggesting to Internet users that it is owned or operated by, or otherwise legitimately affiliated with, the Complainant. While the Respondent's ultimate intention with regard to the disputed domain name is unclear, the Panel can conceive of no use that the Respondent could make of the disputed domain name without causing confusion with the Complainant's trademark and taking unfair advantage of, and/or causing unfair detriment to, that trademark.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the failure of the Respondent to submit a response or provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, the Respondent's concealment of its identity and the implausibility of any good faith use to which the disputed domain name may be put and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of 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 <serco-groupplc.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Catherine Slater/

Catherine Slater

Sole Panelist

Date: October 22, 2025