

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Hess Corporation v. Juan Navarro
Case No. D2025-4505

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Hess Corporation, United States of America (“United States”), represented by Com Laude Limited, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is Juan Navarro, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <hessguyana.com> is registered with GoDaddy.com, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on October 31, 2025. On October 31, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On October 31, 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 (Registration Private, Domains By Proxy, LLC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on November 3, 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 November 10, 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”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on November 11, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was December 1, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on December 3, 2025.

The Center appointed Clark W. Lackert as the sole panelist in this matter on December 10, 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 leading global energy company engaged in the exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas. Its brand history of the trademark HESS, either in block letter form or within a rectangular

logo  (the “Mark”) goes back to 1933, when it was founded by Leon Hess. The Complainant primarily operates in offshore Guyana, North Dakota’s Bakken shale area, the deepwater Gulf of Mexico, and the Gulf of Thailand.

In 2024, the Complainant reported a revenue of USD 12.9 billion, and currently employs around 1,800 employees. The Complainant - through its wholly-owned subsidiary Hess Guyana Exploration Ltd - owns a stake of around 30% in Stabroek Block, a massive offshore oil and gas field located in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Guyana. Stabroek Block is one of the most prolific oil discoveries in recent history and is operated by three companies (namely, ExxonMobil, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and the Complainant). In 2024, oil from Guyana’s Stabroek Block was the Complainant’s most profitable resource.

The Complainant operates an official website at “www.hess.com”.

The Complainant owns a number of trademark registrations on the Mark throughout the world, including:

Jurisdiction	Trademark	Registration Number	Registration Date
United States	HESS	836173	October 3, 1967
United States	HESS	1391095	April 22, 1986
United Kingdom	HESS Logo	UK00001503668	November 18, 1994
Brazil	HESS	821244701	May 25, 2004
European Union	HESS Logo	001395805	November 30, 2000
International	HESS Logo	943618	June 1, 2007

The disputed domain name was registered on October 3, 2025. It resolves to the Registrar’s parking page.

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 disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its Mark in that it only differs by the addition of the geographical term “Guyana”. The Complainant refers to section 1.8 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition (“[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)”), which asks, “Is a domain name consisting of a trademark and a descriptive or geographical term confusingly similar to a complainant’s trademark?” and answers: “Where the relevant trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise) would not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element.”

When included within the Complainant's Mark the geographical adornment "Guyana" does not dispel any possibility of confusion. Instead, considering the close connection of the Complainant to Guyana as outlined above (namely, being the location of one of the Complainant's most important assets), it only increases the potential for confusion. The Complainant further notes that it operates a local subsidiary in Guyana named "Hess Guyana Exploration Ltd". For completeness, the Complainant submits that the Top-Level Domain ".com" is required only for technical reasons and, as is common in proceedings under the UDRP, can be ignored for the purposes of comparison of the disputed domain name to the Complainant's Mark. The Complainant therefore claims that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its Mark HESS.

The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent does not have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, and requests that the Panel's attention be drawn to section 2.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), which asks, "How do panels assess whether a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name?" and answers: "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. If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element."

The Complainant has found no evidence that the Respondent has been commonly known as Hess or Hess Guyana prior to or after the registration of the disputed domain name. The Respondent is not a licensee of the Complainant and has not received any permission or consent to use its HESS trademark and name. The Complainant has found no evidence that the Respondent owns any trademarks incorporating the terms Hess or Hess Guyana. Equally, the Complainant has found no evidence that the Respondent has ever traded legitimately under the names Hess or Hess Guyana. The Complainant contends that given the fame of their mark (as outlined above), their close connection to Guyana country, and the confusing similarity of the disputed domain name to said mark, there is no conceivable use to which the disputed domain name could be put now, or in the future, that would confer any legitimate interest upon the Respondent.

In all these circumstances, taken cumulatively or singularly, the Complainant asserts that they have established a prima facie case along the lines anticipated by section 2.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#) that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Complainant notes that at this point of the submission that the website associated with the disputed domain name is "passively held" as it resolves to a holding page of the Registrar record. The Complainant asserts that such passive holding of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith. The Complainant has referred to section 3.3 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#) which notes: From the inception of the UDRP, panelists have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or "coming soon" page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. While panelists will look at the totality of the circumstances in each case, factors that have been considered relevant in applying the passive holding doctrine include: (i) the degree of distinctiveness or reputation of the complainant's mark, (ii) the failure of the respondent to submit a response or to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, (iii) the respondent's concealing its identity or use of false contact details (noted to be in breach of its registration agreement), and (iv) the implausibility of any good faith use to which the domain name may be put.

For completeness, the Complainant notes that the holding page by the Registrar to which the disputed domain name resolves to displays of advertisement links. These placements advertise services offered by the Registrar. The Complainant notes that it is well-established under the Policy that in most circumstances the display of pay-per-click advertising in association with a domain name that is confusingly similar to a complainant's trademark is sufficient on its own for a finding of registration and use in bad faith, regardless of whether it was directly placed by the registrant or its registrar of record.

The Complainant also refers to section 3.5 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#) which asks: “Can third-party generated material ‘automatically’ appearing on the website associated with a domain name form a basis for finding bad faith?” and answers: “Particularly with respect to ‘automatically’ generated pay-per-click links, panels have held that a respondent cannot disclaim responsibility for content appearing on the website associated with its domain name (nor would such links ipso facto vest the respondent with rights.” The Complainant contends that even if the advertising was placed by the Registrar or another third party, the Respondent cannot disclaim responsibility for it being displayed on their website associated with the disputed domain name.

The disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant’s Mark plus the additional geographical term “Guyana.” The additional term “Guyana” corresponds to the Complainant’s business using the Mark associated with its Guyana-based business activities. As such, the Complainant states that the nature of the disputed domain name constitutes registration of the disputed domain name in bad faith.

B. Respondent

The Respondent is in default and 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 Mark and the disputed domain name. [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.

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.

Moreover, the nature of the disputed domain name, which incorporates the Mark together with the country name “Guyana” where the Complainant does its business, is inherently misleading as it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

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.

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. In this case, the disputed domain name adds the country name “Guyana” where the Complainant does its business after the Mark, which makes it confusingly similar to the Mark as well as to the name of the Complainant’s wholly-owned subsidiary Hess Guyana Exploration Ltd. The Panel finds that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name with the Mark in mind, which constitutes bad faith.

The disputed domain name resolves to the Registrar’s parking page. Therefore, it has not been actively used. 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 or reputation of the Complainant’s Mark, and the composition of the disputed domain name, 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.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds 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 <hessguyana.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Clark W. Lackert/

Clark W. Lackert

Sole Panelist

Date: December 19, 2025