

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Arcelormittal v. Preston Wetherington

Case No. D2025-4897

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Arcelormittal, Luxembourg, represented by Nameshield, France.

The Respondent is Preston Wetherington, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> is registered with Squarespace Domains LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on November 25, 2025. On November 25, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On November 25, 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 (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on November 26, 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 26, 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 December 3, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was December 23, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on December 26, 2025.

The Center appointed Cristian, L. Calderón Rodríguez as the sole panelist in this matter on December 9, 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

ARCELORMITTAL (founded in 2006) is a company specialized in steel producing in the world. Its official website can be found at “www.arcelormittal.com”. It is one of the largest steel producing companies in the world and is a market leader in steel for use in automotive, construction, household appliances and packaging with 57.9 million tons of crude steel made in 2024. It holds sizeable captive supplies of raw materials and operates extensive distribution networks (Annex 3 to the Complaint).

The Complainant owns several trademarks including the wording “MITTAL” in several countries, such as:

- The European Union trademark MITTAL n° 3975786 registered on December 1, 2005;
- The International trademark MITTAL n° 1198046 registered on December 5, 2013

The Complainant also owns an important domain names portfolio containing the same wording MITTAL, such as the domain name <mittalsteel.com> registered since January 3, 2003.

The Complainant's trademarks were registered prior to the registration of the disputed domain name.

The disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> was registered on November 16, 2025. The website resolves to an inactive 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.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its trademark MITTAL.

The Complainant is well-known throughout the world, including in the United States of America where the Respondent is located. In this regard, many panels have previously acknowledged the Complainant's reputation worldwide, making it unlikely that the Respondent was not aware of the Complainant's rights in the MITTAL trademark.

The considerable value and goodwill associated with the MITTAL mark is most certainly what motivated the Respondent to register the disputed domain name.

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> is confusingly similar to its trademarks MITTAL. Indeed, the Complainant's trademark is included in its entirety. The Complainant asserts that the addition of the letter “s” and the term “group” is not sufficient to escape the finding that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the trademarks. It does not change the overall impression of the designation as being connected to the Complainant's trademarks. It does not prevent the likelihood of confusion between the disputed domain name and the Complainant and its trademarks. It is well-established that “a domain name that wholly incorporates a Complainant's registered trademark may be sufficient to establish confusing similarity for purposes of the UDRP”, *Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG v. Vasiliy Terkin*, WIPO Case No. D2003-0888.

Furthermore, the Complainant contends that the addition of the generic Top-Level-Domain (“gTLD”) “.com” does not change the overall impression of the designation as being connected to the Complainant’s trademarks. It does not prevent the likelihood of confusion between the disputed domain name and the Complainant, its trademarks and its domain names associated.

The Complainant further contends that the Respondent has no rights nor legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and that it has been registered and used in bad faith.

The Complainant’s MITTAL trademark registrations significantly predate the registration date of the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to Complainant’s contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> is confusingly similar to its trademark MITTAL. Indeed, the disputed domain name includes the Complainant’s trademark in its entirety.

The addition of the terms “s” and “group” does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity. It is well-established that a domain name that wholly incorporates a Complainant’s registered trademark may be sufficient to establish confusing similarity for purposes of the UDRP.

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.

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 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.

Firstly, the Complainant is well-known throughout the world, including in the United States of America where Respondent is supposedly located. In this regard, many panels have previously acknowledged the Complainant’s reputation worldwide, making it unlikely that the Respondent was not aware of the Complainant’s rights in the MITTAL trademark (*LEGO Juris A/S v. My Store Admin, Wrangler Bags*, WIPO Case No. [D2024-2560](#)).

Secondly, considering the composition of the disputed domain name entirely reproduces the Complainant's trademark MITTAL associated to the word "group", it is unlikely that the Respondent did not have the Complainant's trademark and company name in mind while registering the disputed domain name.

Therefore, the Respondent most likely registered the disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> based on the notoriety and attractiveness of the Complainant's trademark to divert Internet users to its website for future commercial gain. Hence, it is implausible that the Respondent did not have the Complainant's trademark in mind at the time of registration of the disputed domain name.

Consequently, in view of the abovementioned circumstances, the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Some elements may be put forward to support the finding that the Respondent also registered the disputed domain name in bad faith.

Previous panels have considered that in the absence of any license or permission from the Complainant to use such widely known trademark, no actual or contemplated bona fide or legitimate use of the domain name could reasonably be claimed (*Alstom, Bouygues v. Webmaster*, WIPO Case No. [D2008-0281](#); *Guerlain S.A. v. Peikang*, WIPO Case No. [D2000-0055](#)).

As the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark, previous panels have ruled that "a likelihood of confusion is presumed, and such confusion will inevitably result in the diversion of Internet traffic from Complainant's site to Respondent's site" (*MasterCard International Incorporated ("MasterCard") v. Wavepass AS*, WIPO Case No. [D2012-1765](#); *Edmunds.com, Inc. v. Triple E Holdings Limited*, WIPO Case No. [D2006-1095](#)).

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name would not prevent the 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 trademark, 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.

Therefore, the disputed domain name <mittalsgroup.com> was registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 <mittalsgroup.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Cristian, L. Calderón Rodríguez/
Cristian, L. Calderón Rodríguez
Sole Panelist
Date: January 24, 2026