ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
SOPRA STERIA GROUP v. XIAOWEI XIE
Case No. D2026-3516

1. The Parties

The Complainant is SOPRA STERIA GROUP, France, represented by Fidal, France.

The Respondent is XIAOWEI XIE, United Kingdom.

2. The Domain Names and Registrar

The disputed domain names <soprasteria.club> and <thesoprasteria.com> are registered with GoDaddy.com, LLC (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on August 7, 2026. On August 10, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On August 10, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain names 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 August 14, 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 amendment to the Complaint on August 18, 2026.

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 20, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 9, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on September 12, 2026.

The Center appointed Stefan Bojovic as the sole panelist in this matter on September 17, 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 under the name Sopra, and is specialized in IT consulting, digital services and software development. Following the merger with the company Steria, the Complainant adopted Sopra Steria Group as its corporate name in 2014.

The Complainant is the owner of the SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks which are protected by trademark registrations in a number of jurisdictions, including the following:

- European Union Trademark Registration No. 013623889 for SOPRA STERIA (word/device), registered on May 15, 2015;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1290669 for SOPRA STERIA (word/device), registered on September 24, 2015;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1163226 for SOPRA, registered on April 8, 2013; and
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 003803061 for STERIA, registered on September 26, 2005.

The Complainant also owns a considerable number of domain names reflecting its SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks, such as <soprasteria.com>, registered on April 7, 2014, <sopra-steria.com>, registered on April 11, 2014, and <soprasteria-group.com>, registered on April 15, 2014.

The disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> was registered on July 21, 2026, while the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> was registered on July 11, 2026. The disputed domain names resolved to websites that purport to imitate the Complainant's official website and display the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark and logo. At the time of this Decision, the disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> resolves to a "404 Not Found" page, while the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> still resolves to the same website.

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 names.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain names wholly incorporate the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks and, as such, are confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademarks. The addition of the article "the" in the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> has no impact on the overall impression created, as it does not alter the distinctive element "soprasteria" which remains clearly recognizable within this disputed domain name. The generic Top-Level Domains ("gTLDs") ".com" and ".club" are viewed as a standard registration requirement and are therefore disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. The Complainant also adds that the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the Complainant's domain names that include the "soprasteria" element, as well as to the Complainant's company name.

With reference to rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain names, the Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain names. The Complainant has never authorized the Respondent to register the disputed domain names incorporating

its SOPRA STERIA trademark. In addition, 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, which has not been the case regarding the disputed domain names. The Complainant also highlights that the Respondent is making a non-legitimate use of the disputed domain names, as they were registered without the Complainant's authorization and resolve to active websites available in English and Chinese that reproduce and imitate the Complainant's official website, including its visual identity, trademarks and content.

With reference to the circumstances evidencing bad faith, the Complainant contends that due to its long-standing use of the SOPRA STERIA trademark in connection with its IT consulting, digital services and software development activities since 1968, the Respondent was necessarily aware of the Complainant's rights at the time of registration of the disputed domain names. In light of the distinctiveness and reputation of the SOPRA STERIA trademark, it is not conceivable that the Respondent registered the disputed domain names without knowledge of the Complainant. On the contrary, the circumstances indicate that the Respondent deliberately targeted the Complainant's trademarks. The use of the disputed domain names to reproduce the Complainant's website constitutes a clear case of cybersquatting. The only plausible explanation for the Respondent's conduct is the intent to take unfair advantage of the reputation of the Complainant's trademarks by creating confusion among Internet users. In the present case, both disputed domain names incorporate the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark in its entirety and resolve to active websites imitating the Complainant's official website, including its overall look and feel, visual identity, trademarks, content, colors, layout and images. Such use is likely to mislead Internet users into believing that the websites are operated by, or affiliated with, the Complainant. The Complainant adds that unauthorized use of the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark and the visual identity of its official website is capable of facilitating the collection of personal data from Internet users under false pretenses. Such conduct further evidences the Respondent's bad faith.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

According to paragraph 15(a) of the Rules: "A Panel shall decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable." Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy stipulates that the complainant must prove each of the following:

(i) that the disputed domain names registered by the respondent are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the complainant has rights;

(ii) that the respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain names; and

(iii) that the disputed domain names have been registered and are being used in bad faith.

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 names. 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 the SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1. Although the Complainant has based its

Complaint on the SOPRA STERIA, SOPRA, and STERIA trademarks, the Panel holds that for the purposes of the analysis of the first UDRP element, it is sufficient to take into account only the SOPRA STERIA trademark. Having in mind that the SOPRA and STERIA trademarks consist of single verbal elements that are already contained within the SOPRA STERIA trademark and that the disputed domain names reproduce SOPRA STERIA trademark in its entirety, the Panel deems an analysis of all the trademarks to be redundant and, as such, would not make any impact on the Panel's conclusions regarding the first UDRP element. The Panel will, where appropriate, also use the same approach in assessment of the second and the third UDRP elements.

The Panel also notes that the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark is a figurative mark consisting of the verbal element SOPRA STERIA and a red and orange logo between the words "sopra" and "steria". Panel assessment of identity or confusing similarity involves comparing the (alpha-numeric) disputed domain name and the textual components of the relevant trademark. To the extent that design (or figurative/stylized) elements would be incapable of representation in domain names, these elements are largely disregarded for purposes of assessing identity or confusing similarity under the first element. Such design elements may be taken into account in limited circumstances e.g., when the domain name comprises a spelled-out form of the relevant design element. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.10.

The entirety of the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark is reproduced within the disputed domain names, and in case of the disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> it is reproduced without any additional elements. Accordingly, the disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> is identical with, while the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms (here, the article "the" in the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com>) may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds that the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> and the Complainant's trademark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.8.

In addition, it is well established that ".club" and ".com", as gTLDs, are disregarded in the assessment of the confusing similarity between the disputed domain names and the trademark. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.11.1.

The Panel, therefore, finds that 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 that 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.

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 names. 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 names such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel notes that according to the record there is no relationship between the Respondent and the Complainant and that the Respondent is not a licensee of the Complainant, nor has the Respondent otherwise obtained an authorization to use the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark. There appears to be no element from which the Panel could infer the Respondent's rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names, or that the Respondent might be commonly known by the disputed domain names.

The disputed domain names resolved to websites that purport to imitate the general look and feel of the Complainant's official website and display the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark and logo. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity (here, claimed impersonation and passing off) can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.13.1.

Since the disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> is identical with the Complainant's trademark, while the disputed domain name <thesoprasteria.com> contains the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark in its entirety in combination with the article "the", both disputed domain names also carry a risk of implied affiliation. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.5.1.

Having in mind the above, 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 3.1, section 3.2.1.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent must have been well-aware of the Complainant and its SOPRA STERIA trademark at the time of the registration of the disputed domain names. Namely, the first registration and use of the Complainant's trademarks predate the registration of the disputed domain names by years, making it unlikely that the Respondent was not aware of the Complainant's trademark at the time of registration of the disputed domain names. Furthermore, the content of the websites to which the disputed domain names resolved leaves no room for doubt as to the Respondent's knowledge of the Complainant and its trademarks and demonstrates that the Respondent had the Complainant in mind when registering the disputed domain names.

Due to the above, the Panel finds that the disputed domain names have been registered in bad faith.

As indicated above, the disputed domain names resolved to websites that purport to imitate the general look and feel of the Complainant's official website and display the Complainant's SOPRA STERIA trademark and logo. Such use of the disputed domain names clearly demonstrates bad faith on the Respondent's side. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity (here, claimed impersonation and passing off) constitutes bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4.

While the disputed domain name <soprasteria.club> seems to no longer resolve to an active website, such inactivity does not prevent a finding of bad faith.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain names constitute bad faith under the Policy.

Therefore, 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 names <soprasteria.club> and <thesoprasteria.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Stefan Bojovic/
Stefan Bojovic
Sole Panelist
Date: October 2, 2026