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Customs control frameworks are vital to today's importers

COVID-19 staff shortages and remote working have led many customs administrations to replace physical inspections carried out at the border with post-entry desk reviews based on customs declarations. In the latest edition of [EY TradeWatch publication](#), we report on this trend in Egypt, India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Digital audit techniques can improve international trade for all parties. Trusted trader programs, such as Authorized Economic Operator in the European Union, and India's new "faceless audit" program, for example, can greatly speed up flows of goods. But these programs can also expose weaknesses in companies' systems, especially in periods of high disruption to global trade.

In this environment, importers need to adopt an agile trade strategy, backed by robust internal controls. Using global trade management software and data analytics, companies can look critically at their global supply chains; they can examine their customs declarations, documentation and processes to identify potential weaknesses and underpayments as well as missed cost-saving opportunities. Once these control tests are defined, they must be repeated systematically.

Businesses may use their own in-house resources to carry out these activities, outsource them to specialist trade advisers — or adopt a hybrid approach. Each organization will find its own best fit. But in today's rapidly moving trade environment, having an effective customs control framework is vital for trade success.

Read more in [TradeWatch Issue 3 2021](#).

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- ▶ [Issue 41: How businesses can navigate transfer pricing risks](#)
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Contact us for more information

Luis Coronado
EY Global Tax Controversy
and Transfer Pricing Leader
luis.coronado@sg.ey.com

Kevin MacAuley
EY Global Indirect Tax Leader
kmacauley@uk.ey.com

Jeff Michalak
EY Global International Tax and
Transaction Services Leader
jeffrey.michalak@ey.com

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