
Australian Trusted Trader – evolving to benefit all

29 September 2016

In brief

- Over 340 businesses applied for the Australian Trusted Trader (ATT) programme in its first three months of operation. As of 22 September 2016, there are five accredited Trusted Traders.
 - The Australian Border Force's (ABF) treatment of the Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) as part of the ATT application process is becoming more efficient, resulting in the ABF increasing its focus on the validation stage.
 - The first Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) was signed between Australia and New Zealand, bringing the facilitation of trans-Tasman trade to new levels.
 - Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Canada are in negotiations with Australia to establish Trusted Trader MRAs. China is progressing its negotiations with Australia through our customs strategic partnership.
 - Exporters can submit customs-related issues concerning goods-arrival into export markets to PwC to raise for consideration with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) in MRA negotiations.
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In detail

This is another instalment in our year-long series on the ATT programme. The ATT aims to provide preferential treatment for international traders who meet supply chain security and trade compliance standards. International traders who are accredited under the programme will receive a range of commercial benefits, such as reduced supply chain costs, improved speed to market and freeing up working capital.

This month, we update on the programme's status three months post-launch, plus the shift in the ABF's focus from the SAQ stage to the validation process and exciting news on the MRA front.

Strong interest for the programme

The ATT successfully launched on 1 July 2016. The programme received strong interest from many businesses throughout Australia, with over 250 applications received in the first three weeks of launch.

To date, five businesses are accredited as Trusted Traders. Two are Australian in origin and the other three operate as Australian subsidiaries of foreign entities. Equally of note, service providers and small-

medium enterprises (SMEs) have also expressed interest in the programme. The variety of applicants indicate the ATT is garnering international recognition, and that it is ideal for any global or local business, no matter the size.

Increased efficiency in the processing of applicants

By way of background, the SAQ establishes detailed information about your business, operations, trade compliance and international supply chain security measures. Importantly for applicants, the ABF is increasing efficiency in managing the SAQ desktop assessment stage of the application. As a result, the regulator is devoting more attention to conducting robust validations of the applicant's supply chain security and trade compliance. Businesses should be prepared for this when the ABF conduct site visits and verification exercises.

Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) – have your say

MRAs effectively ensures a business' Trusted Trader status is recognised in foreign jurisdictions. The first MRA was signed in July 2016, between the Australian DIBP and the New Zealand Customs Service. We expect this to act as proof of concept for further MRAs, accelerating negotiations and signing with other key trading partners. In fact, MRA negotiations between Australia and Hong Kong, Korea, Canada and Singapore have significantly progressed. MRA discussions are also moving ahead with China through the Australian-Chinese strategic partnership.

The DIBP has requested for information on customs-related issues that Australian traders face when their goods land in export markets so that these issues can be factored into MRA negotiations. PwC is consolidating a list of issues to submit to the DIBP. Please reach out to your local PwC international trade consultant to have your issues addressed.

The takeaway

Interest in the ATT continues to build, with more applications submitted each month. Businesses who would like to be accredited Trusted Traders should not delay entry. Otherwise, increasingly extended delays in the application process are to be expected.

Applicants in the ATT accreditation process should be aware of the DIBP's greater focus on a robust assessment of their supply chain and trade compliance as part of the validation stage.

Exporters with customs-related issues concerning goods arriving in export markets can contact our Trade consultants below to contribute to PwC's submission to the DIBP.

Let's talk

For a deeper discussion of how these issues might affect your business, please contact:

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