

Why has it taken the work of one tax campaigner to stop...

Published: January 15, 2026, 12:54 am

The [Guardian has reported that](#):

Amazon is quietly rooting out many of its Chinese traders who do not hold UK VAT numbers to try to protect itself from tax evasion inquiries later this year when new [HMRC](#) powers come into force, the Guardian has learned.

The online retailer has been conducting a review of sellers' VAT compliance in the UK. It is understood to have contacted many Chinese sellers, giving them until the end of the month to provide their VAT numbers.

So here are some questions.

First, why did it take two people - [indefatigable VAT campaigner Richard Allen](#) and Neven Juretic of VATfraud.org - to make this happen?

Second, why did this only happen when Richard got [Rob Marris of the Labour Treasury team](#) on board?

And third, if Amazon knew of this risk why did they not act before now when the cost may have been £2 billion a year to the UK?

If think the first is for HMRC and the Treasury to answer, the second for David Gauke MP and the third for Amazon.

I will be happy to post replies.