

Known Unknowns: The Uncertainty of the Trump Administration Tariffs

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The Section 232 and Section 301 tariffs imposed by the Trump Administration last year have created a universe of “known unknowns” in which many companies – American and foreign – now find themselves having to operate.

The known unknowns are numerous. How long will the Section 232 steel and aluminum tariffs last? Which countries will remain subject and which will be granted general exceptions or quotas? Will a product exclusion be granted and, if so, will it be renewed in a year? Will President Trump be sufficiently satisfied with the progress made in negotiations with China to keep the Section 301 tariffs at current levels or even eliminate them? Will the President impose additional Section 232 tariffs? Will the tariffs last beyond 2020 or 2024? Will Congress act to expand or reign in presidential trade authority?

This article reviews those subject and looks at how U.S. companies are responding to the Section 232 and Section 301 tariffs in different and important ways, even as the uncertainty persists.