

Highly Migratory Species Dealer Reporting Family of Forms OMB Control No. 0648-0040

Minor adjustments associated with a final rule to modify Southeast Region Dealer Reporting form for HMS (RIN 0648-AU89)

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is modifying the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Dealer Reporting Family of Forms (OMB Control No. 0648-0040) and its Southeast Region (SER) Dealer Reporting form for HMS to improve program efficacy and enforceability. The modified regulations will: 1) allow dealers that receive shark product to check a box on the form to indicate whether or not sharks are landed with their fins naturally attached; 2) clarify that sharks must be reported according to species, and 3) specify that forms must be received by NMFS within a specified timeframe.

The final rule will require that all sharks have their fins naturally attached through offloading. The check box added to the Dealer Reporting form for HMS will allow dealers to indicate whether or not sharks are offloaded with their fins naturally attached and maintained in this form throughout the offloading. This information will also provide dealer verification for fishermen to show if sharks were offloaded with their fins naturally attached. The final rule will also clarify that dealers must report sharks according to species on the Dealer Reporting forms (*i.e.*, no unclassified sharks can be reported), which is the current regulation; however, unclassified sharks continue to be reported. The forms will continue to be collected on a biweekly basis to monitor swordfish, shark, and tuna (*i.e.*, bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack or “BAYS”) landings as well as landings of coastal pelagics (*i.e.*, dolphin, greater amberjack, king mackerel, escolar, and wahoo). However, the final rule will adjust NMFS regulations to indicate that the Dealer Reporting forms must be *received* by NMFS with ten days after the bimonthly reporting period (*i.e.*, the 25th or 10th of each month) rather than postmarked within ten days after the end of the bimonthly reporting period. The information on this form is used to track landings against quotas and collect landings data for use in stock assessments; timely and species-specific reports are necessary for accurate quota monitoring. There will be no change in the amount or frequency of reporting or to the costs associated to dealers as a result of these adjustments.