

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
1ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES RECREATIONAL LANDINGS AND
BLUEFIN TUNA CATCH REPORTS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0328

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The number of vessel owners permitted in the HMS Angling, HMS Charter/Headboat, Atlantic Tunas General and Atlantic Tunas Harpoon Categories is presented in Table 2. Only anglers fishing on vessels permitted in these categories are allowed to fish for swordfish, billfish, or bluefin tuna outside of registered HMS tournaments. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) does not know the actual respondent universe number, only the number of swordfish, billfish, and bluefin tuna landed and some data on bluefin tuna discarded dead. The number of permit holders represents only the maximum number of respondents, but this is not the same as a universe for sampling purposes. There is no sampling or any other method used to select respondents in this data collection. The swordfish, billfish, and bluefin tuna landings and dead discard reports are mandatory; therefore this collection is a census of landings and dead discards (for commercial handgear fishermen) NMFS does not know what the response rates are, nor can NMFS predict them, because NMFS is not conducting a statistical survey from a known universe of respondents.

Table 2. Number of HMS permits by year and category, 2003 - 2012.

Year	Angling	Charter/ Headboat	General	Harpoon
2003	18,804	4,167		
2004	20,245	3,881		
2005	24,127	3,963		
2006	25,238	4,173		
2007	24,220	3,899		
2008	26,933	4,297		
2009	25,506	4,150		
2010	24,479	4,174		
2011	23,138	4,194		
2012	21,686	3,968	4,084	14

Based on the amount of quota available for bluefin tuna and past landing and discard reports for bluefin tuna and landing reports for swordfish and billfish, it is estimated that up to 11,058 individual reports could be expected each year (Table 3).

Table 3. Estimated number of annual responses (angler reports)

Species	States	Estimated number of responses
Bluefin Tuna Landings	MD & NC	5,034
	Other states	3,790
Billfish and Swordfish	All	1,258
Shark Catch Cards	MD	267
Bluefin Tuna Catch	All	7,285
Total		17,634
Weekly/Biweekly and Annual Reports	MD&NC	64
Bluefin Tuna Verification Calls	MD&NC	22
Total Responses including all requirements		17,720

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

As stated above, all permitted anglers or vessel owners landing a bluefin tuna, swordfish, or billfish or commercial hand gear fishermen discarding a bluefin tuna dead are required to report within 24 hours. Landing reports may be made via phone, internet, or landings cards, depending on the state. Discard reports must be made via internet. Reports are mandatory and no statistical methodology or sample selection is involved. Degree of accuracy needed is not relevant since this is a mandatory reporting program which strives for 100 percent compliance. No specialized sampling procedures and no use of periodic data collection is involved since this collection is 100 percent mandatory.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Response rates and nonresponse are terms that apply to statistical surveys based on sampling. This is not a statistical survey because the entire population is being surveyed and no generalization based on a sample of the population will be made; therefore, this question does not apply. However, to further encourage a high response rate (compliance rate), NMFS

conducts an outreach program ([compliance guides](#), mailings, list serve network, etc.) to inform permit holders of the reporting requirements, and to indicate the importance of reliable information for stock assessment purposes and social/economic analysis of potential management measures. NMFS also raises the aforementioned reporting requirements during all appropriate public hearings, discussions with leaders of the recreational community, and other meetings with the recreational angling community to encourage improved reporting.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

No tests of procedures or methods will be undertaken, although as mentioned in Part A, Question 4, the MRIP and LPS programs survey a similar group of respondents. These surveys and their resulting reports include feasibility analyses for potential modifications to the current information collection. One such study was conducted under this PRA clearance in Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Catch Card Pilot Program) to assess the feasibility of introducing a catch card program similar to those in Maryland and North Carolina. The final report for this study is currently in review.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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