

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION AND
REPORTING
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0323**

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.

All HMS tournaments (approximately 300: 210 targeting billfish and 90 targeting only tuna and/or sharks) are required to be registered and all 300 tournaments are eligible to be selected for reporting.

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 HMS tournaments are eligible for reporting selection. Selection of tournaments for reporting is based on fisheries management program-based needs. At this time, the Recreational Billfish Survey (NMFS SEFSC) selects all billfish tournaments for reporting. While all HMS tournaments are eligible for reporting selection, the existing HMS tournaments program does not currently have the staff or technologies to collect and store the amount of data that would be produced by requiring all tournaments (including tunas and over 40 shark species) to report. NMFS is currently examining the resources required to collect the catch reports of all HMS tournaments online or via app in order to obtain reliable, long-term fishery-dependent data in an efficient manner.

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.

Tournaments that are selected for reporting are required by law to submit a completed tournament summary form along with a copy of tournament rules to NMFS within seven days after the completion of tournament fishing (50 CFR 635.5(d)). The reporting form and selection notice are provided to tournament operators. Tournament operators already collect this information to determine a tournament winner. Because the information is readily available to tournament operators, it is possible to complete the reporting summary form quickly and easily. The only additional time or cost burden associated with the collection would be for transcribing, photocopying and mailing/faxing. Because of the mandatory requirement and because the

reporting form summarizes information that tournament operators already have, NMFS anticipates a high response rate. In recent years, response rates have varied from 82 – 94%.

To further encourage a high response rate, NMFS conducts an outreach program (brochures, mailings, e-mail network, etc.) to inform tournament operators of the registration and reporting requirements, and to indicate the importance of reliable tournament information for stock assessment purposes and social/economic analysis of potential management measures. Information obtained on the HMS tournament registration and reporting forms is analyzed for reliability before it is incorporated into stock assessments. In order to obtain more reliable and complete data, NMFS continues to consider the option to require all HMS tournaments to submit catch summaries.

From 2010 to 2013, the average response rate was 80.4% (i.e., reports/selected tournaments were 120/155 (2013), 136/169 (2012), 137/178 (2011), and 163/190 (2010)).

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.

The information obtained from HMS tournament reports may be incorporated into stock assessment documents, prepared by NOAA fishery scientists, if the data is considered reliable. The stock assessment documents are then discussed and peer-reviewed by domestic and international experts before any policy-related agreements or decisions are made. The peer review process may suggest any possible modifications to the information collection, if deemed necessary.

HMS management staff tested the online tournament registration system throughout the summer 2015 tournament season to identify glitches or issues before making the portal available to tournament operators. Most recently, operators with upcoming tournaments have been invited to test the site and provide feedback on the ease and clarity of the site, as well as whether the operator would prefer to use online registration in the future. NMFS plans to continue inviting operators to register online and provide feedback until we have obtained five individuals' feedback.

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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