

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
OMB Control No. 0648-0040
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Dealer Reporting Family of Forms

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS) fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. NMFS requires dealers to report their purchases of HMS and uses the data to estimate fishing mortality and report landings data to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, among other things.

NMFS has modernized its dealer reporting system for Atlantic bluefin tuna landings by replacing the facsimile (FAX)-based optical character recognition system with an online reporting application. The new online electronic system collects the same data fields, at the same interval, as those that were previously collected via FAX. Instead of hand-writing out a landing form and faxing it into an automated system, dealers now log into the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) (https://safis.accsp.org:8443/safis_prod/f?p=SAFIS:101:::) and key in the required data electronically over the internet. Using SAFIS may reduce the reporting burden for dealers that have to report bluefin tuna to both NMFS and their state marine fisheries agency since each agency can access the data submitted into SAFIS.

NMFS published a final rule without a prior proposed rule because the software NMFS used to process the faxed forms was no longer supported and thus was unreliable and could affect reporting. Furthermore, the online reporting process simplifies and improves reporting, and should not impact any members of the regulated community negatively, and will not change the substance or value of the reports. Thus, it is in the best interest of the regulated public.

This change in reporting methodology will not increase the reporting burden, costs, or number of respondents in this collection. The change is associated with RIN 0648–BG16, which published on June 29, 2016.