

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration**  
**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 government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

All HMS tournaments (approximately 300: 210 targeting billfish and 90 targeting only tunas and/or sharks) are required to register with NMFS and all 300 tournaments are selected for reporting. Given the relatively small universe of managed entities, a census-based approach is appropriate, as a majority of tournaments would need to be sampled anyway to ensure catch estimates of adequate precision for science and management. Billfish tournaments are a primary source of recreational landings for blue marlin, white marlin, and roundscale spearfish, so their selection for reporting is essential to effectively monitor the annual 250-fish landings limit for those species set by ICCAT.

**2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- Estimation procedure,
- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- 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 selected for reporting. Selection of tournaments for reporting is based on fisheries management program-based needs.

**3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that 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 to 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.

Response rates were further improved with the implementation of the ATR online reporting system, which in 2020 was used by over 90 percent of tournament operators to meet both their tournament registration and reporting requirements.

**4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.**

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 spring and summer 2018 tournament season to identify glitches or issues before making the portal available to tournament operators.

**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.**

For HMS Tournament Registration: Tobey Curtis  
Tournament Registration Administration  
NMFS/HMS Management Division  
(978) 281-9273

For HMS Tournament Reporting:

Arietta Venizelos  
Billfish Tournament Catch Reporting Data Collection  
NMFS/Southeast Fisheries Science Center  
75 Virginia Beach Drive  
Miami, FL 33149  
(305) 361-4214

Yong-Woo Lee  
Large Pelagics Survey Statistician/Billfish Accounting  
NMFS/Office of Science and Technology  
(301) 427-8170