

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Atlantic 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 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.

The number of vessel owners holding HMS Angling or Charter/Headboat permits, or Atlantic Tunas General or Harpoon category permits 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 data on bluefin tuna discarded dead. The number of permit holders represents the maximum number of potential 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 and Atlantic Tuna permits by year and category, 2013 - 2023.

Year	Angling	Charter/Headboat	General	Harpoon
2013	21,686	3,968	3,783	14
2014	20,239	3,742	3,396	14
2015	20,566	3,663	3,230	23
2016	20,020	3,594	2,910	9
2017	20,338	3,618	2,940	11
2018	20,086	3,635	2,942	21
2019	21,407	3,769	2,721	20
2020	22,833	3,839	2,645	7
2021	23,632	4,055	2,730	35
2022	23,607	4,175	2,630	27

2023	24,502	4,305	2,779	37
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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 17,743 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 Recreational Catch	MD	807
	Other states	9,884
Billfish and Swordfish	All	1,811
Shark Catch Cards	MD	128
Bluefin Tuna Commercial Catch	All	5,080
Bluefin Tuna Verification Calls	All	20
Total		17,730
Weekly/Biweekly and Annual Reports	MD	13
Total Responses including all requirements		17,743

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, 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 permitted anglers catching (e.g., landing or discarding dead) a bluefin tuna, or landing a swordfish or billfish, or commercial handgear fishermen catching a bluefin tuna are required to report within 24 hours. Reports may be made via internet, smartphone app, or landings cards, depending on the state. 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 that 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 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.

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, listserv 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. Furthermore, our outreach efforts for these reporting requirements have greatly benefitted from the efforts of our partners with state fisheries agencies, the fishery management councils, and the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement.

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.

No tests of procedures or methods will be undertaken, although as mentioned in Part A, Question 4, the MRIP and Large Pelagics Survey (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.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on 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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