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

Abstract

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requests the approval of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for a revision and extension of the existing collection of information under OMB Control Number 0648-0328 for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Recreational Landings and Bluefin Tuna Catch Reports. Under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA) of 1975, the Secretary of Commerce is required to promulgate regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to implement binding recommendations adopted by the International Commission on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). ICCAT requires the United States (U.S.) to collect biological statistics for research purposes and establishes annual quotas that limit the overall U.S. bluefin tuna and swordfish catches and U.S. recreational marlin landings. Timely access to recreational bluefin tuna catch data (e.g., landings and dead discards) and swordfish and marlin landings is vital to effectively monitor and manage the U.S. quotas. This collection provides such access so that managers can implement appropriate measures to limit catch or landings as necessary. This information collection request (ICR) is being modified to reflect the decision by the states of Maryland and North Carolina to discontinue their state catch card programs, which will necessitate HMS permit holders to shift to using the existing Federal reporting options for their HMS catch reports. The state of North Carolina discontinued their HMS catch card program in April 2025, while the state of Maryland's program was discontinued in December 2025. This ICR has been revised to reflect that shift in reporting burden. Previously submitted revisions pursuant to proposed rule 0648-BM23 will be addressed by a separate action.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

This request is for revision and extension of a previously approved information collection request (ICR) for Atlantic HMS open access permitted (HMS Angling, HMS Charter/Headboat, and Atlantic Tunas General and Harpoon category) vessels with recreational landings of Atlantic billfish, swordfish, and bluefin tuna catch and dead discards. The revision to this ICR is due to the discontinuation of the Maryland and North Carolina HMS catch card programs.

The U.S. Secretary of Commerce is authorized to regulate fisheries for Atlantic HMS under the

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act[1] (MSA; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et. seq.*) and ATCA[2] (16 U.S.C. 971 *et. seq.*), as amended. Under ATCA, the Secretary of Commerce is required to promulgate regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to implement binding recommendations adopted by the ICCAT. ICCAT requires the U.S. to collect biological statistics for research purposes for all HMS (including tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks) and establishes annual quotas that limit the overall U.S. bluefin tuna and swordfish catches, and U.S. recreational marlin landings. ICCAT also requires that data be collected on all sources of fishing mortality. ATCA specifically provides the Secretary of Commerce with the authority to "require any commercial or recreational fisherman to obtain a permit from the Secretary and report the quantity of catch of a regulated species" [16 U.S.C. 971(d)(c)(3)(I)]. Domestically, under the authority of the MSA, the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) was developed and implemented to manage Atlantic HMS fisheries and establish the framework for managing the U.S. quotas.

Timely access to recreational bluefin tuna catch data (e.g., landings and dead discards) and swordfish and marlin landings is vital to effectively monitor and manage the U.S. quotas for those species. This collection provides such access so that managers can implement appropriate measures to limit catch or landings as necessary. For example, fishing seasons may be closed when a designated limit is reached. This collection also allows NMFS to report the total catch of bluefin tuna and total landings of swordfish and billfishes annually to ICCAT, consistent with international obligations. Quota overages may require adjustments in future years under domestic regulations or result in penalties including reductions in future annual quota allocations through ICCAT.

This collection also includes mandatory reporting of bluefin tuna that are landed or discarded dead by the recreational Angling category and commercial Atlantic Tunas General category, Atlantic Tunas Harpoon category, or HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders (i.e., vessel reporting). NMFS implemented catch reporting by vessels under Amendment 7 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (HMS FMP) to better account for all sources of bluefin tuna fishing mortality as required by ICCAT. Catch data includes information about bluefin tuna that are caught and discarded dead as well as those that are landed.

Under this collection, fishermen (i.e., HMS vessel permit holders, or those required to hold such permits) have the option of using an internet website or a smartphone app to report their recreational landings of Atlantic swordfish, white marlin, blue marlin, or sailfish or their commercial or recreational catch of bluefin tuna. Currently, HMS permit holders also have the option to report their HMS catches via a designated phone line, but this option will eventually be discontinued as part of a proposed electronic reporting rulemaking (RIN 0648- BM23). However, if a fisherman reports recreationally landing a bluefin tuna greater than or equal to 73" in length, NMFS may continue to call to verify reported information.

These data collection systems are in place for states along the Atlantic and Gulf of America and the U.S. territories in the Caribbean. However, when a fish was landed in Maryland or North Carolina, state reporting stations were used to submit a state landings report (catch card) and

[1] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3//dam-migration/msa-amended-2007.pdf
[2] https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title16/chapter16A&edition=prelim

obtain a fish tag. This ICR is being revised to reflect the fact that the States of North Carolina and Maryland discontinued their state HMS catch card programs in April and December 2025, respectively. Therefore, HMS permit holders in these states must now report their HMS catches via the existing federal reporting systems managed by NMFS. The associated burden estimates included within this ICR have been adjusted to reflect these changes.

Previously submitted revisions pursuant to proposed rule 0648-BM23 will be addressed by a separate action.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

This information collection applies to all recreational fishermen that land billfishes or swordfish along the U.S. Atlantic, Gulf of America, and Caribbean; and commercial or recreational fishermen who catch bluefin tuna with handgear. NMFS requires a report for each landing (i.e., individual fish) of billfish or swordfish from recreational fishermen, and a report for each bluefin tuna caught and landed or discarded dead by Angling category (recreational), General category, Harpoon category, and Charter/Headboat permitted fishermen.

NMFS uses the information collected to monitor and manage domestic fisheries and quotas for swordfish, bluefin tuna, sharks, and billfishes to comply with ICCAT limits and annual reporting requirements, and domestic law. NMFS also uses the information in stock assessments or in scientific studies as appropriate. Other states and agencies, including fishery management councils and interstate fishery management commissions, may use the data to coordinate with other fishery management programs. The information is also valuable for determining the geographic distribution of the catch and recreational landings of these species, which is an element of NMFS' domestic fishery management.

Recreational fishermen that land swordfish or billfish, including in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, or recreational fishermen or commercial General category, Harpoon category, or HMS Charter/Headboat category fishermen that catch bluefin tuna in any state or federal waters must report their catch/landing via internet or smartphone app. If a recreationally-caught bluefin tuna greater than or equal to 73" is landed and reported, a follow-up call may be made by NMFS staff to the respondent to verify the submitted data.

The following information is collected:

Date is necessary for verification of landings information and for use in scientific studies of stock movements and domestic policy development. Species is necessary to categorize and account for the landing appropriately. Vessel name, registration # (state ID), permit holder's name, and Atlantic HMS Permit number (including Atlantic Tunas permit number) are necessary to verify that the angler has valid permits (state fishing license and HMS vessel permit), and to identify any fraudulent reporting. The permit holder's name, phone number, vessel name, and vessel identification number are collected with purchase and renewal of HMS vessel permits

(OMB 0648-0327), and can be compared to the information entered on the catch report. Type of trip (private, charter, or headboat) is necessary to characterize the fishery for the development and analysis of regulatory actions. Was the fish caught during a tournament and tournament name are necessary to identify fish that would/should have already been reported through the tournament reporting collection (OMB 0648-0323) and avoid double counting. Fish size (length and/or weight) is necessary for use in scientific studies of stock life history.

Additional data collected includes, trip departure date and time; port and state of departure; trip end date and time; port and state of landing; fishing technique (deep drop, drift, troll, kite, or other); bait type (live, dead, lure, combination, or other); hook type ("J" hook or circle hook); approximate time hooked**;** approximate fight time; and number of releases for each species. Responses to each of these items provide trip and fishery-specific information for social, economic, and biological analyses, thereby enhancing NMFS' ability to gauge the impacts of regulations and demonstrate compliance with international requirements.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

This information collection is highly automated. Fishermen reporting recreational bluefin tuna, swordfish, or billfish, including in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, or reporting commercial bluefin tuna catch have the choice of reporting online or with a mobile smartphone app. For-hire captains with federal electronic logbook reporting requirements can now also report their HMS catch via their logbook reports if they are using the SAFIS eTrips[3] Mobile or Online systems, or via the Bluefin LLC VESL[4] mobile reporting app or online system.

The landings report website (https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/[5]) is also used by NMFS to disseminate important regulatory information to fishermen, such as inseason fishery actions (e.g., fishery closures).

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2.

This collection minimizes duplication or overlap with other information collections. NMFS is the Federal agency responsible for marine fisheries data collection and the management of Atlantic HMS fisheries. As described in Question 2 of this Supporting Statement, reports ask if the fish were caught in a fishing tournament and, if so, what tournament. These questions are included to allow NMFS to identify fish that may have already been reported by a tournament operator through HMS tournament reporting (OMB 0648-0323). As described in question 3, NMFS has

[3] https://www.accsp.org/what-we-do/safis/etrips/
[4] https://www.bluefindata.com/
[5] https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/

further worked to reduce duplicate reporting burden by collaborating with the Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) to integrate HMS catch reporting into their SAFIS eTrips system and Bluefin Data's VESL program, both of which are commonly used for electronic for-hire logbook reporting. The agency is currently working to integrate HMS catch reporting into the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's (GARFO) Fish Online[6], which is also commonly used for electronic for-hire logbook reporting. As described in Question 1, the rulemaking revising this ICR is also considering implementation of electronic logbook reporting (OMB 0648-0371) for three of the permit categories with reporting requirements under this ICR. By integrating HMS catch reporting into the major platforms used to submit electronic logbook reports, NMFS will provide HMS permit holders with multiple options that will allow them to meet both requirements with a single report.

NMFS exercises a high degree of internal coordination between this collection and two other long-term information collections from recreational fishermen: the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP fishing effort survey, OMB 0648-0652, and MRIP Access Point Intercept Survey, OMB 0648-0659) and the Large Pelagics Survey (LPS, OMB 0648-0380). MRIP is a general (dockside, telephone, and mail) survey of anglers fishing for all species, including HMS (tuna, billfish, swordfish, and sharks). MRIP sample sizes are typically too small to provide the catch estimate precision needed to manage many HMS fisheries. HMS anglers are specifically targeted by the LPS, which produces more precise estimates of HMS catch than the general MRIP survey, but not precise enough to replace the exact counts of the targeted HMS species, nor could it do so within 24 hours of landing. The HMS recreational reporting program overlaps with these surveys only minimally on the small percent of surveyed trips that resulted in bluefin tuna, billfish, or swordfish being landed. To the extent that overlap occurs (e.g., a person reporting via catch card or directly to NMFS is also selected for a dockside, mail, or telephone interview), the information is useful to assess compliance with the mandatory reporting requirement.

Bluefin tuna survey data and HMS recreational landings data are used for different purposes by fishery managers and stock assessment scientists. For billfish landings, several data sources are combined (MRIP, LPS, catch cards, tournament reports, and recreational (non-catch card) landings reports) but protocols are in place to identify double counting across programs. Therefore, data collected from other recreational programs are mostly used in a complementary manner along with HMS catch card and recreational reporting data.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

All of the respondents are considered small entities. The collection is not expected to have a significant impact on them. Minimizing reporting burden on the public was one of the primary reasons for use of electronic reporting in this program. All reporting options (internet, smartphone app) are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No costs are associated with reporting on the internet or using the smartphone app. Reporting requires a minimal investment

[6] https://apps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov/certify/OpenID?response_type=code&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fapps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov%2Ffishtank%2Flogin%2F&client_id=50467&nonce=85a434da58d5d92b0c2f6c244fd3e1cd&state=10bd7712833ce3ed8b9b5c3907330fa1&scope=openid

of time, is cost-free for the public, and can be performed at any public internet access site.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

If the bluefin tuna catch portion of this collection were not conducted, NMFS would not be able to effectively monitor the amount of bluefin tuna landings and interactions, which are essential to keeping catch within the specified quotas. It is also essential for achieving domestic management objectives, including the goal of the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and its amendments to better account for all sources of bluefin tuna fishing mortality.

If this entire information collection were not conducted, or were conducted less frequently, the U.S. could exceed quotas and be subject to ICCAT penalties, including reduction of the nation's allocated catch quota, the potential imposition of trade restrictions, and other sanctions.

The stock assessments for these species, which provide the basis for domestic and international management decisions, would be less accurate without this information, since approximately 50 percent of the western Atlantic bluefin tuna quota and 30 percent of North Atlantic swordfish quota is allocated to the U.S. Without close monitoring of these fisheries, the conservation and management objectives of MSA and ATCA could be jeopardized. Furthermore, it would be difficult for the U.S. to formulate domestic policy consistent with the MSA, which must be based on the best available scientific and socio-economic data. The information gathered in this collection is essential for NMFS in its preparation of documents such as Regulatory Impact Reviews and Environmental Impact Statements, as required under the MSA, National Environmental Protection Act, and other applicable laws during the formulation of domestic policy.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

OMB guidelines state that respondents should not be required to report information more often than quarterly. Each individual catch and/or landing must be reported, and if reports are not immediately accounted for, enforcement of this requirement would be difficult. Moreover, reports are needed on a per-trip basis to reduce the potential for recall bias and to prevent a build-up of backlogged reports. Without frequent landings reports, NMFS would not be able to monitor seasonal harvest in a timely manner, and might be required to close seasons early to avoid excess harvest, or risk overharvesting ICCAT quotas, both of which could unnecessarily penalize U.S. fishermen.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

A Federal Register Notice published on July 11, 2025 (90 FR 30876[7]) solicited public comments. No comments were received during the 60-day comment period. Previously submitted revisions pursuant to proposed rule 0648-BM23, and public comments received concerning those proposed revisions, will be addressed by a separate action.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a system of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

As stated in the Paperwork Reduction Act statements available for review on all electronic reporting venues and forms for this collection, it is NOAA policy to preserve the confidentiality of information submitted under this reporting requirement, except that NMFS may release such information in aggregate or summary form, such that individual identifiers are not disclosed (NAO 216-100[8]). Information such as the number of registered tournaments, the species that they targeted, and the states in which they occurred is provided in the annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, in FMP regulatory amendments, and in supporting documents made available to the public upon request. All other information submitted under this reporting requirement remains confidential, or is released only in aggregate or summary form such that individual identifiers (e.g., permit holder's name, phone number, postal address, and e-mail address) are not disclosed.

System of Record COMMERCE/NOAA-19[9], Permits and Registrations for United States Federally Regulated Fisheries, authorizes the collection of the information in this collection. The privacy impact assessment that references this collection is NOAA4000[10].

[7] https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/04/28/2025-07236/agency-information-collection-activities-submission-to-the-office-of-management-and-budget-omb-for
[8] https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-100-protection-of-confidential-fisheries-statistics
[9] https://www.commerce.gov/node/4991
[10] https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/NOAA4000%20PIA%20FY25%20SAOP%20Approved.pdf

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This collection does not include questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

COMMERCIAL CATCH (bluefin tuna only)

All commercial bluefin tuna caught (e.g., landed or discarded dead) with handgear must be reported to NMFS. Potential respondents include the universe of individuals with HMS permits in the General category, Harpoon category, or Charter/Headboat category with a Commercial Sale Endorsement (Table 1).

Table 1. Universe of commercial HMS permit holders that would be required to report if they caught a bluefin tuna.

Permit Category	Number of Permit Holders in 2023
General	2,154
Harpoon	37
Charter/Headboat with commercial sale endorsement	2,006
TOTAL	**4,197**

Table 2 compares dealer landings data, which is an accurate census of total commercial bluefin tuna landings, with vessel reported landings data obtained under this information collection. Charter/Headboat and General category permit holder data were combined since landings are attributed to the same subquota. The requirement to report commercially landed bluefin tuna went into effect in 2015, and at the time of the 2016 renewal, compliance among the General category fishery was very low at around 14 percent. By the time ICR was renewed in 2019, compliance had increased another 50 percent to over 65 percent. Since then, compliance rates have remained stable, with the overall compliance rate currently sitting at approximately 67 percent (Table 2).

Table 2. Compliance with reporting requirements for landed fish during 2022.

Quota Category	Dealer Reports		Vessel Reports		% Compliance	
	No. of Bluefin Reported	No. of Fishermen	No. of Bluefin Reported	No. of Fishermen	% Fish Reported	% Fishermen Reporting
General	5,112	1,130	3,323	758	64.9	67.1

Harpoon	452	24	410	19	90.7	79.2
TOTAL	5,564	1,154	3,733	761	67.0	65.9

NMFS assumes that the reporting compliance for landed fish was the same for discarded fish, and estimated the number of reports for discarded fish by adding a 35% increase to the number of General category reports and 10% to the number of Harpoon category reports for discarded fish (Table 3).

Table 3. Estimated number of discarded fish estimated to be reported for each category. General and Charter/Headboat reported numbers were increased by 31 percent to account for under-reporting.

Permit Category	Dead Discards	
	Reported	Estimated
General & Charter/Headboat	21	28
Harpoon	0	0
TOTAL	21	28

Table 4 includes landings and estimated discards for each category for 2022. Landings numbers from 2022 were used to estimate potential burden as it saw the most landings (by number) of commercial-sized bluefin tuna of any year in the last five years. The number of landings and number of dead discards are added for each category to give the total number of responses. Reporting of most bluefin tuna caught by commercial handgear is expected to take approximately 5 minutes per report, whether completed via internet smartphone app. Catch for each category was added and multiplied by the 5 minutes it takes to complete a report for each fish, for an estimated total reporting burden of **5,592 responses and 466 hours,** affecting a total of potentially **4,197 permit holders (Table 4)**. However, in 2022 only **1,154 permit holders** successfully landed bluefin tuna commercially.

Table 4. Calculation of number of responses and reporting burden (hours) based on actual number of bluefin tuna landings and estimated numbers of dead discards.

Permit Category	Number of Bluefin Tuna Landed in 2022	Estimated Number of Bluefin Discarded Dead 2020	Projected Total Annual Catch (Number of Fish Landed + Number Discarded Dead) = Total Responses	Total Amount of Time (hrs) (5 mins per response / 60 min/ hour)
General & Charter/Headboat	5,112	28	5,140	428
Harpoon	452	0	452	38
TOTAL	5,564	**28**	**5,592**	**466**

RECREATIONAL CATCH

Reporting of most recreationally caught (e.g., landed or discarded dead) bluefin tuna and/or landed swordfish and billfish is expected to take approximately 5 minutes per report, whether completed via internet or smartphone app. Call-back verification for bluefin tuna greater than or equal to 73" is also expected to take approximately 5 minutes per landing. The number of respondents is calculated separately for bluefin tuna and billfish/swordfish. Previous ICR submissions also calculated responses for North Carolina and Maryland separately, but with both states discontinuing their HMS catch card programs effective in April and December 2025, respectively, this ICR will now count those reports with the rest of the states as anglers in those states will have to revert to federal reporting.

Bluefin Tuna

The total number of bluefin tuna that could be landed or discarded dead based on the ICCAT-recommended U.S. quota is estimated to be 11,200 fish. This estimate is based upon weights of fish within the various bluefin tuna size classes using previous years' landings data from 2025. The number of respondents is estimated to equal the number of fish landed or discarded dead.

(11,200 responses × 5 minutes/response) ÷ 60 minutes/hour = **933 hours.**

During the last three years, approximately 20 respondents have been called annually to verify information for bluefin tuna landed that exceed 73" in length. Verification takes approximately five minutes per response.

(20 responses × 5 minutes/response) ÷ 60 minutes/hour = **2 hours**

Swordfish and Billfish

Pursuant to ICCAT recommendation, the U.S may recreationally harvest up to 250 blue and white marlin, combined, on an annual basis. In most years, the reported number of these fish landed has been significantly less than the 250 limit **(Table 5);** however, to allow for the full 250 marlin landing limit to be reported through this collection, NMFS is calculating burden based on a maximum of 250 marlin landings. Roundscale spearfish are included in the white marlin estimates because they are hard to distinguish from white marlin and landings data are likely a mix of the two species. Sailfish landings data must be reported to ICCAT annually. The U.S. has an ICCAT-recommended annual quota for swordfish, and a domestic incidental fishery annual quota for swordfish that includes recreational landings.

Table 5. Total and non-tournament recreational landings of billfish by year.

Year	Species									
	Blue Marlin		White Marlin		Roundscale Spearfish		Sailfish		Swordfish	
	Total	Non-Tourn.	Total	Non-Tourn.	Total	Non-Tourn.	Total	Non-Tourn.	Total	Non-Tourn.

2009	44	5	53	6	5	0	140	140	474	389
2010	28	3	72	5	19	0	192	185	331	285
2011	43	3	56	6	7	0	173	166	347	318
2012	63	18	30	7	4	0	184	163	415	386
2013	55	11	49	15	1	0	173	171	279	263
2014	54	5	42	6	2	0	118	113	304	281
2015	63	23	66	20	10	0	114	113	332	315
2016	80	17	60	14	22	1	114	114	500	458
2017	62	17	61	11	6	0	105	104	568	518
2018	90	15	78	27	20	0	98	94	661	619
2019	79	28	75	31	35	2	110	96	1,296	1,234
2020	74	22	95	19	66	0	50	50	940	872
2021	98	36	56	27	21	0	72	66	690	603
2022	100	32	38	14	12	1	84	81	960	848
2023	103	21	28	15	4	1	65	61	687	604
2024	70	14	42	4	4	0	54	32	735	539

Based on the recent fishing years that presented the greatest number of non-tournament landings, NMFS anticipates up to 1,419 swordfish and sailfish landings [1,234 swordfish (2019) + 185 sailfish (2010) = 1,419]. In order to ensure that our estimate is slightly higher to allow for a greater number of landings, 10 percent is added, giving an adjusted total of 1,561 potential responses (1,419 x 1.1 = 1,561). Therefore, NMFS estimates that a maximum of **1,811 responses** [(250 blue marlin + white marlin) + (1,561 swordfish + sailfish) = 1,811] could be required to report non-tournament recreational landings of swordfish and billfish.

(1,811 × 5 minutes/response) ÷ 60 minutes/hour = **151 hours**

Total Calculations

Table 6. Estimates number of annual respondents, responses, burden hours, and annual wage costs associated with HMS recreational landings and bluefin tuna catch reports.

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Profession)	# of Respondents	Annual # of Responses / Respondent	Total # of Annual Responses	Burden Hrs / Response	Total Annual Burden Hrs	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs
Commercial Bluefin Tuna Catch Reports - General, Harpoon, and Charter/Headboat	Commercial Fishing Captains	1,130	5	5,650	0.083	471	$29.23	$13,767
Recreational Bluefin Tuna Catch Reports - Other states/territories reported landings and call-backs for fish over 73"	All occupations	11,220	1	11,220	0.083	935	$31.48	$29,434
Billfish and Swordfish Catch Reports	All occupations	1,811	1	1,811	0.083	151	$31.48	$4,753
18,623		**14,161**		**18,681**		**1,557**		**47,954**

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

There are no costs in supplies or materials other than the time burden.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

Annual maintenance costs for the recreational reporting automated program are reimbursed by an administrative cost recovery fee included in Atlantic HMS permit fees, which are collected via the same system. While there will be no cost to the Federal government in the end, the budget breakdown for administration of the system is included in Figure 11.

Table 11. Estimated costs to the Federal government for administration of HMS recreational landings and bluefin tuna catch reports.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	ZA-IV	$245,271	5.8%		$14,226
Other Federal Positions	ZP-IV	$245,271	5.0%		$12,264
Other Federal Positions	ZP-IV	$245,271	5.8%		$14,226
Other Federal Positions	ZP-III	$174,543	5.0%		$8,727
Other Federal Positions	ZA-V	$288,497	2.5%		$7,212
Contractor Cost					$613,350
Other Costs:					
State Grants for Catch Card Programs					$84,000
Indirect Costs					$30,861
FMS Collection Expense					$97,849
TOTAL					**$882,715**

The Commerce Alternative Personnel System (CAPS)[11] Rest of U.S. locality rates were used to determine the base salary. The Rest of U.S. locality was used since NOAA staff are geographically dispersed. The upper bound for Interval 3 of each Pay Band was used as the base salary and a multiplier of 1.5 was used to calculate the loaded salary.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

Program changes: Program changes included the elimination of the North Carolina and Maryland catch card programs, which will require HMS permit holders in those states to switch to reporting via the federal HMS catch reporting program.

Program adjustments: The number of fish caught and number of permitted fishermen during recent years is used to estimate future responses and burden. Landings and catch varies from year to year. Additionally, reporting compliance has increased. However, there were no program adjustments to this submission as recent years saw fewer reports than the years used to estimate burden for the last revision.

Table 4. Estimated change or adjustment to annual reporting burden associated with HMS recreational landings and bluefin tuna catch reports.

Information Collection	Respondents		Responses		Burden Hours		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	
Commercial Bluefin Tuna Catch Reports - General, Harpoon, and Charter/Headboat	1,130	1,078	5,650	5,080	471	423	Adjusted for recent catch data
Recreational Bluefin Tuna Catch Reports - Reported landings and call-backs for fish over 73"	11,220	9,580	11,220	9,580	935	798	NC and MD respondents shifting to federal reporting
Billfish and Swordfish Catch Reports	1,811	1,502	1,811	1,502	151	125	NC and MD respondents shifting to federal reporting
Bluefin Tuna Landing Cards for MD and NC	0	1,131	0	1,131	0	188	NC and MD Catch Card programs discontinued
MD and NC swordfish and billfish landings reports	0	309	0	309	0	52	NC and MD Catch Card programs discontinued
Maryland Shark Landings Reports	0	128	0	128	0	21	MD Catch Card program discontinued
State Summary Reports	0	2	0	64	0	70	NC and MD Catch Card programs discontinued
Total for Collection	**14,161**	**13,730**	**18,681**	**17,794**	**1,557**	**1,677**	

[11] https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/CAPS%20Standard%20Pay%20Tables%202026.pdf

Difference	431 (-1,570 prgm chg) (2,001 adjustment)	887 (-1,632 prgm chg) (2,519 adjustment)	-120 (-331 prgm chg) (211 adjustment)	

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

The information collected is disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. Collected information is published in stock assessments, management strategy evaluations, environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, reports to ICCAT, the annual HMS SAFE Report, and regulatory impact reviews. The data are presented in aggregate form, which cannot lead to the identification of individuals.

NMFS will retain control over personal information such as the angler's name and address and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with legal requirements and NOAA policy for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

All forms for this collection will display the OMB Control Number and expiration date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

The agency certifies compliance with 5 CFR 1320.9 and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).