
Tournament Registration

How do I know if I need to register my tournament with NMFS?

A **tournament operator** must notify the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the purpose, dates, and location of any **tournament** involving **highly migratory species** (HMS) *at least four weeks prior* to commencement of the tournament.

HMS include:

- **Atlantic Billfish** (blue & white marlin, sailfish)
- **Tunas** (bluefin, yellowfin, skipjack, albacore, bigeye);
- **Sharks** (small coastals, large coastals and pelagic sharks)
- **Swordfish**

A **tournament** is defined as “any fishing competition involving Atlantic HMS in which participants must register or otherwise enter, or in which a prize or award is offered for catching or landing such fish.”

A **tournament operator** means a person or entity responsible for maintaining records of participants and results used for awarding tournament points or prizes, for Atlantic HMS tournaments, including billfish, conducted from a port in an Atlantic coastal state, including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, regardless of whether fish are retained.

How do I register my tournament?

Tournament operators must submit completed registration forms to the address indicated on the form or FAX to (727) 570-5656. An internet web site is currently being developed for online registration.

Call Buck Sutter or Jill Stevenson at (727) 570-5447 to obtain a registration form or download the registration form from www.nmfspermits.com or www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hmspg.html .

If available, please also send a copy of the tournament brochure and rules to the same address.

What information do I need to supply when registering an HMS tournament?

Information requested on the registration form includes:

- * **the tournament name**
- * **location (city and state)**
- * **dates of tournament held**
- * **expected number of participating vessels**
- * **the nature of the tournament (catch and release versus kill tournament)**
- * **director/operator name with his/her address, phone number, and fax.**

The tournament operator must indicate on the tournament registration form **all billfish and other HMS** for which points or prizes are awarded in the tournament.

Tournament Reporting

How will I know if my tournament has been selected?

The NMFS will notify billfish and other HMS tournament operators in writing, when his or her tournament has been selected for reporting. If you are selected, NMFS will send you a reporting form that must be returned to NMFS within 7 days after tournament fishing has been completed.

What information do I need to fulfill my reporting requirements?

The tournament operator that is selected must maintain and submit to the NMFS a record of catch and effort on billfish and other HMS tournament summary report forms provided by the NMFS. In addition, billfish tournament operators must also submit radio logs or catch certificates containing detailed capture information including: fishing hours, name of each boat fishing that day, bait types and fight times for all billfish captured or released, and weight, length, and sex of each billfish brought ashore.

Where do I send completed tournament reporting forms?

Tournament operators must submit completed forms to the NMFS address included on the reporting form, **postmarked not later than the 7th day after the conclusion of the tournament** and must attach a copy of the tournament rules.

Why is tournament registration and reporting necessary?

Tournament notification is a critical measure for developing a sampling frame to allow for better monitoring, data collection, and reporting of billfish and other HMS tournaments.

Tournament reporting is used to estimate tournament fishing effort and landings of billfish, and other highly migratory species, for stock assessments and national statistical reports. These requirements also facilitate compliance with the 1997 ICCAT recommendation to improve monitoring of billfish landings.

For more information please contact:

Buck Sutter or Jill Stevenson

Phone: (727) 570-5447; Fax: (727) 570-5656

email: buck.sutter@noaa.gov

You can also visit:

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hmsspg.html

This pamphlet was prepared in February 2001 to provide interested fishermen a summary only of new tournament registration and reporting requirements resulting from the first amendment to the Atlantic billfish FMP. Regulations may be found at 50 CFR part 635, published on May 28, 1999. Since fishery rules are subject to change, fishermen must familiarize themselves with the latest complete regulations and are responsible for complying with current official regulations.

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Highly Migratory Species Division
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Highly Migratory Species TOURNAMENTS

Registration & Reporting Requirements



NOAA FISHERIES
National Marine Fisheries Service

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Office of Sustainable Fisheries

