

Highway Loss Data Institute Bulletin

Pedestrian-Related Bodily Injury Liability Claim Frequencies, Hybrids versus their Conventional Counterparts

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INTRODUCTION

Hybrid vehicles generate little noise when operating under battery power making them harder for pedestrians to detect. This may increase the likelihood of pedestrians being struck by hybrids. If this is the case, bodily injury (BI) claim frequencies for claims without associated collision or property damage liability (PDL) claims should be higher for hybrids than for their non-hybrid versions. It is expected that a large proportion of the BI claims without associated collision or property damage liability claims are pedestrian or bicyclist related. Hereafter BI claims without associated collision or property damage liability claims will be referred to as injury only BI claims. The purpose of this study is to determine if the injury only BI claim frequency for hybrids differs from the non-hybrid versions of the same vehicles. To facilitate interpretation of the injury only BI claim frequencies, this study will also examine the difference in claim frequencies for BI claims with associated vehicle damage (BI claims with an associated collision or PDL claim) between hybrids and non-hybrids.

METHODS

Insurance coverages – Automobile insurance covers damage to vehicles and property as well as injuries to people involved in crashes. Different insurance coverages pay for vehicle damage versus injuries, and different coverages may apply depending on who is at fault. The current study is based on bodily injury liability (BI), collision, and property damage liability (PDL) coverages. Bodily injury liability coverage insures against medical, hospital, and other expenses for injuries that at-fault drivers inflict on occupants of other vehicles or others on the road. In this study, bodily injury liability losses were restricted to data from traditional tort states. Property damage liability coverage insures against physical damage that at-fault drivers cause to other people's vehicles and property in crashes. Collision coverage insures against physical damage to an at-fault driver's vehicle sustained in a crash with an object or other vehicle.

Concurrent coverage and injury only BI claims – Concurrent coverage means a vehicle is insured under two or more relevant coverage types at the time of a loss—in this study BI, collision and PDL. In forming the data for this study, exposure and claim data for BI were joined with those for collision and PDL at the VIN (vehicle identification number) level so that during the overlapped exposure period the association between claims can be explored to identify whether a BI claim occurs in an injury-only crash that has associated vehicle damage.

Vehicles studied – To be included in this study, a hybrid series must have had either an exact non-hybrid counterpart to be matched for a hybrid/non-hybrid series pair (e.g., Toyota Camry sedan) or a carefully selected non-hybrid comparable enough to be used in the pairing (e.g. Lexus GS 450 hybrid/Lexus GS 350). Also, both the hybrid and its non-hybrid counterpart must have at least one injury only BI claim. The Toyota Prius and the Honda Insight were excluded because they do not have a non-hybrid counterpart. Seventeen hybrid series and their non-hybrid counterparts were included in the analysis. Mild hybrids (Chevrolet Malibu, Saturn Aura and Saturn Vue) were also excluded from the study. Mild hybrids operate differently than full hybrids. A full hybrid can operate using the gasoline engine only, electric power only, or a combination of both; however, a mild hybrid uses the gasoline engine or a combination of gasoline engine and electric power. Since mild hybrids are never in complete electric mode, they do not operate as quietly as full hybrids. The Honda Civic and Honda Accord were also eliminated. The Honda vehicles operate more like traditional hybrids than mild hybrids yet at low speeds power is supplied by both the electric battery and the gasoline motor. Studied vehicles included 2002-2010 models during 2004-2010 calendar years with only the four most current model years studied per calendar year, totaling 25,382 BI claims and 2,890,386 years of exposure.

Analysis methods – BI claim frequencies, defined as claims per 1,000 insured vehicle years, measure how likely a vehicle is to inflict injuries on vehicle occupants or others on the road. In order to establish a basis for comparison, a Poisson regression was performed to compare frequencies of BI claims with associated vehicle damage between the hybrid and non-hybrid groups while controlling for other factors. This regression provides an estimate of the difference in crash rates between hybrids and non-hybrids and illustrates differences in crash rates that the model cannot control for, such as driver differences not captured in the demographic covariates or differences in driving patterns not captured in the garaging zip code. A second Poisson regression compared injury only BI claim frequencies between the hybrid and non-hybrid groups using the same model.

Figure 1 further illustrates the difference in frequencies for BI claims with associated vehicle damage between hybrids and their non-hybrid counterparts. The frequency for BI claims with associated vehicle damage for hybrids was estimated to be 2.4% ($p=0.246$) higher than that for their non-hybrid counterparts. This difference was not statistically significant.

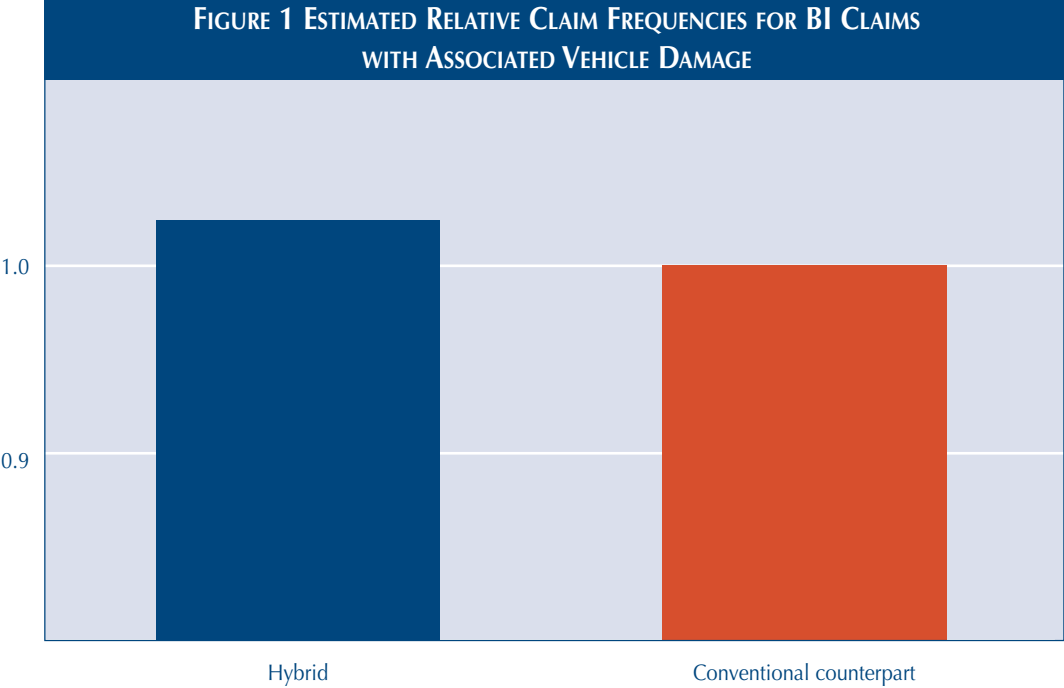


Table 3 summarizes results of the Poisson regression analysis of injury only BI claim frequencies. The number of BI claims used in this regression was just 9% of the number of claims used in the BI claim frequencies with associated vehicle damage (2,034 versus 23,348). Most of the covariates including the hybrid status variable had p-values less than 0.05, indicating their effects on injury only BI claim frequencies were statistically significant.

TABLE 3 SUMMARY RESULTS OF POISSON REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INJURY ONLY BI CLAIM FREQUENCY			
	DEGREE OF FREEDOMS	CHI-SQUARE	P-VALUE
Calendar Year	6	10.13	0.1192
Rated Driver Age Group	4	19.46	0.0006
Rated Driver Gender	2	5.60	0.0609
Rated Driver Marital Status	2	37.55	<0.0001
Rated Driver Risk	1	7.04	0.0080
State	32	227.71	<0.0001
Vehicle Age	1	3.74	0.0532
Vehicle Density	2	71.48	<0.0001
Vehicle Series	16	32.31	0.0091
Hybrid Status	1	7.10	0.0077

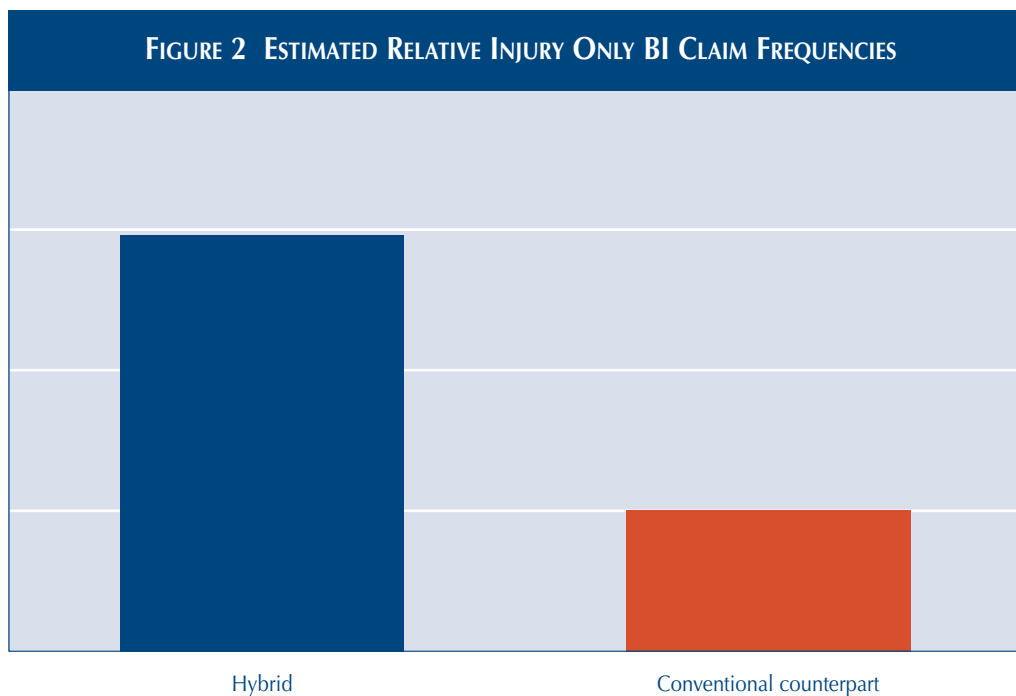
Table 4 lists details of the estimates of injury only BI claim frequencies for the independent variables. Only states with the highest and lowest effects are listed, along with the comparison state of California. The results for Wyoming are based on limited data and differ greatly from the rest of the states but the difference is not statistically significant. Detailed results for all states are listed in Appendix B.

TABLE 4 DETAILED RESULTS OF POISSON REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INJURY ONLY BI CLAIM FREQUENCY								
PARAMETER	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	ESTIMATE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	LIKELIHOOD RATIO 95% CONFIDENCE LIMITS		WALD CHI-SQUARE	P-VALUE
INTERCEPT	1	-12.8197		0.1494	-13.1126	-12.5268	7359.29	<0.0001
CALENDAR YEAR								
2004	1	0.78090	1.18344	0.31430	0.16490	1.39680	6.17	0.0130
2005	1	0.20680	0.22974	0.17940	-0.14490	0.55840	1.33	0.2491
2006	1	0.10750	0.11349	0.10690	-0.10200	0.31700	1.01	0.3146
2007	1	0.11320	0.11986	0.07340	-0.03080	0.25710	2.38	0.1233
2008	1	0.03460	0.03521	0.05980	-0.08260	0.15170	0.33	0.5630
2010	1	-0.09700	-0.09244	0.07580	-0.24560	0.05160	1.64	0.2006
2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
RATED DRIVER AGE GROUP								
<25	1	0.3724	0.4512	0.0898	0.1964	0.5485	17.19	<0.0001
25-39	1	0.0422	0.0431	0.0555	-0.0665	0.1509	0.58	0.4467
65+	1	0.0025	0.0025	0.0703	-0.1353	0.1403	0.00	0.9719
Unknown	1	0.1921	0.2118	0.0966	0.0027	0.3814	3.95	0.0468
40-64	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
RATED DRIVER GENDER								
Male	1	-0.0342	-0.0336	0.0593	-0.1504	0.0820	0.33	0.5643
Unknown	1	0.2729	0.3138	0.1280	0.0219	0.5238	4.54	0.0331
Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
MARITAL STATUS								
Married	1	-0.1153	-0.1089	0.1303	-0.3707	0.1400	0.78	0.3760
Single	1	0.2676	0.3068	0.1287	0.0154	0.5198	4.33	0.0376
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
RISK								
Non Standard	1	0.1931	0.2130	0.0713	0.0534	0.3328	7.34	0.0068
Standard	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
STATE								
Wyoming	1	-8.2142	-0.9997	26.4373	-60.0303	43.6018	0.10	0.7560
South Dakota	1	-1.8077	-0.8360	1.0024	-3.7723	0.1569	3.25	0.0713
Nebraska	1	-1.5303	-0.7835	0.4502	-2.4127	-0.6478	11.55	0.0007
Montana	1	0.1079	0.1139	0.3426	-0.5636	0.7794	0.10	0.7528
Nevada	1	0.1509	0.1629	0.1667	-0.1757	0.4775	0.82	0.3653
Louisiana	1	0.2758	0.3176	0.0974	0.0849	0.4667	8.02	0.0046
California	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
VEHICLE DENSITY								
0-99	1	-0.4646	-0.3716	0.0700	-0.6018	-0.3274	44.04	<0.0001
100-499	1	-0.4189	-0.3422	0.0567	-0.5302	-0.3077	54.51	<0.0001
500+	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
VEHICLE AGE	1	0.0643	0.0664	0.0333	-0.0010	0.1295	3.73	0.0536
VEHICLE SERIES								
Nissan Altima	1	0.0195	0.0197	0.0658	-0.1094	0.1484	0.09	0.7667
Ford Escape	1	-0.2540	-0.2243	0.0791	-0.4090	-0.0989	10.30	0.0013
Ford Escape 4WD	1	-0.2833	-0.2467	0.0995	-0.4784	-0.0882	8.10	0.0044
Ford Fusion	1	-0.2232	-0.2000	0.2964	-0.8040	0.3577	0.57	0.4515
Lexus GS 450/350	1	-0.2184	-0.1962	0.2081	-0.6263	0.1895	1.10	0.2939
Toyota Highlander 2WD	1	-0.2334	-0.2082	0.1187	-0.4660	-0.0008	3.87	0.0492
Toyota Highlander 4WD	1	-0.3035	-0.2618	0.1044	-0.5081	-0.0989	8.46	0.0036
Mercury Mariner	1	-0.3037	-0.2619	0.2703	-0.8334	0.2261	1.26	0.2612
Mercury Mariner 4WD	1	-0.4289	-0.3488	0.2538	-0.9264	0.0686	2.86	0.0911
Lexus RX 400/330 2WD	1	-0.3262	-0.2783	0.2196	-0.7567	0.1042	2.21	0.1374
Lexus RX 400/330 4WD	1	-0.2108	-0.1901	0.1403	-0.4859	0.0642	2.26	0.1330

TABLE 4 DETAILED RESULTS OF POISSON REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INJURY ONLY BI CLAIM FREQUENCY (CONT'D)

PARAMETER	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	ESTIMATE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	LIKELIHOOD RATIO 95% CONFIDENCE LIMITS		WALD CHI-SQUARE	P-VALUE
Chevrolet Tahoe	1	0.1161	0.1231	0.1667	-0.2106	0.4429	0.49	0.4860
Chevrolet Tahoe 4WD	1	-0.0478	-0.0467	0.2130	-0.4652	0.3697	0.05	0.8225
Mazda Tribute	1	0.0596	0.0614	0.2619	-0.4538	0.5729	0.05	0.8201
GMC Yukon	1	-0.7203	-0.5134	0.4111	-1.5261	0.0854	3.07	0.0798
GMC Yukon 4WD	1	-0.2203	-0.1977	0.3045	-0.8171	0.3765	0.52	0.4694
Toyota Camry	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.
HYBRID STATUS								
Hybrid	1	0.1791	0.1961	0.0662	0.0494	0.3088	7.32	0.0068
Conventional	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.

Figure 2 further illustrates the difference of injury only BI claim frequencies between hybrids and their non-hybrid counterparts. Injury only BI claim frequency for hybrids was estimated to be 19.6% ($p=0.0068$) higher than that for their non-hybrid counterparts.



DISCUSSION

The injury only BI claim frequency for hybrids was estimated to be 19.6% ($p=0.0068$) higher than that for their non-hybrid counterparts. Claim frequencies for BI claims with associated vehicle damage were included in this study as a control or basis for comparison to the injury only BI claim frequencies. The difference in vehicle damage related BI claim frequencies illustrate differences in crash rates between hybrids and non-hybrids for which the model cannot control. The damage related BI claim frequencies for hybrids were estimated to be 2.4% ($p=0.246$) higher than that for their non-hybrid counterparts. This estimate is not statistically significant so the real difference in damage related BI frequencies might be zero. However, if we assume it is a robust estimate then this indicates hybrids are 17.2% (19.6%-2.4%) more likely to inflict injuries on pedestrians than their non-hybrid counterparts. This finding is consistent with findings from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) (Hanna, 2009). NHTSA found that hybrid vehicles had a higher rate of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes than non-hybrid vehicles.

APPENDIX B DETAILED RESULTS OF POISSON REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INJURY ONLY BI CLAIM FREQUENCY

PARAMETER	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	ESTIMATE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	LIKELIHOOD RATIO 95% CONFIDENCE LIMITS		WALD CHI-SQUARE	P-VALUE
STATE								
Wyoming	1	-8.2142	-0.9997	26.4373	-60.0303	43.6018	0.1	0.7560
South Dakota	1	-1.8077	-0.8360	1.0024	-3.7723	0.1569	3.3	0.0713
Nebraska	1	-1.5303	-0.7835	0.4502	-2.4127	-0.6478	11.6	0.0007
Alaska	1	-1.3506	-0.7409	0.7107	-2.7435	0.0424	3.6	0.0574
Iowa	1	-1.1431	-0.6812	0.3063	-1.7434	-0.5427	13.9	0.0002
Oklahoma	1	-0.9506	-0.6135	0.2412	-1.4233	-0.4780	15.5	<0.0001
Wisconsin	1	-0.8545	-0.5745	0.1964	-1.2394	-0.4696	18.9	<0.0001
Missouri	1	-0.8398	-0.5682	0.1660	-1.1652	-0.5144	25.6	<0.0001
Virginia	1	-0.7795	-0.5414	0.1100	-0.9951	-0.5639	50.2	<0.0001
Alabama	1	-0.7407	-0.5232	0.1792	-1.0920	-0.3894	17.1	<0.0001
Tennessee	1	-0.7141	-0.5104	0.1507	-1.0096	-0.4187	22.4	<0.0001
Colorado	1	-0.6770	-0.4919	0.1825	-1.0347	-0.3192	13.8	0.0002
Ohio	1	-0.6374	-0.4713	0.1110	-0.8550	-0.4199	33.0	<0.0001
Maine	1	-0.5407	-0.4177	0.3828	-1.2909	0.2094	2.0	0.1577
New Hampshire	1	-0.4855	-0.3846	0.2655	-1.0058	0.0348	3.3	0.0674
Indiana	1	-0.4791	-0.3807	0.1606	-0.7939	-0.1642	8.9	0.0029
West Virginia	1	-0.3408	-0.2888	0.2324	-0.7964	0.1148	2.2	0.1426
Arkansas	1	-0.3177	-0.2722	0.2172	-0.7435	0.1081	2.1	0.1436
North Carolina	1	-0.3169	-0.2716	0.1015	-0.5159	-0.1179	9.7	0.0018
New Mexico	1	-0.3133	-0.2690	0.2500	-0.8034	0.1767	1.6	0.2102
Georgia	1	-0.2927	-0.2538	0.0989	-0.4867	-0.0988	8.8	0.0031
Mississippi	1	-0.2742	-0.2398	0.1927	-0.6519	0.1035	2.0	0.1548
Illinois	1	-0.2194	-0.1970	0.0831	-0.3822	-0.0566	7.0	0.0083
Connecticut	1	-0.1784	-0.1634	0.1232	-0.4199	0.0631	2.1	0.1478
Rhode Island	1	-0.1271	-0.1194	0.2061	-0.5310	0.2767	0.4	0.5373
Vermont	1	-0.1240	-0.1166	0.3840	-0.8766	0.6285	0.1	0.7467
South Carolina	1	-0.1171	-0.1105	0.1425	-0.3964	0.1622	0.7	0.4112
Idaho	1	-0.1068	-0.1013	0.3079	-0.7103	0.4967	0.1	0.7287
Arizona	1	-0.0358	-0.0352	0.1267	-0.2841	0.2125	0.1	0.7774
Montana	1	0.1079	0.1139	0.3426	-0.5636	0.7794	0.1	0.7528
Nevada	1	0.1509	0.1629	0.1667	-0.1757	0.4775	0.8	0.3653
Louisiana	1	0.2758	0.3176	0.0974	0.0849	0.4667	8.0	0.0046
California	0	0	0	0	0	0	.	.

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