Waiting game
45 minutes for a cab
Kieran Jones and Jamie First

Melbourne's outer suburbs are taxi wastelands, with passengers forced to wait for more than 45 minutes for a cab during peak times.

New figures reveal that Briar Hill and Greensborough, in Melbourne's outer northeast, were the hardest places to catch a cab, while the city, St Kilda and Richmond were the easiest places to hail a cab as taxi drivers stuck to heavily populated areas to increase chances of getting more fares.

Chairman of the Taxi Services Commission Prof Allan Fels said there was a major taxi shortage.

"There are not enough taxis in Melbourne and the problem is worse in the outer suburbs," Prof Fels said.

"The reforms that I have recommended will mean more taxis in places where they are needed."

Taxi drivers told the Herald Sun that wait times extended to up to 45 minutes in the suburbs during weekend peaks, because cabbies wanted to take more shorter fares and spend less time driving empty back to the city.

A study of client data by taxi booking service goCatch found Croydon South, Eltham and Scoresby were also on the list of the 10 toughest places to get a cab.

Skye, Seaford, Ferntree Gully, Boronia and Park Orchards rounded out the top 10. Co-founder of goCatch, Andrew Campbell, said taxi drivers tended to spend their time closer to the CBD.

"More often than not, a taxi driver who takes a passenger to a remote area will drive an empty cab back into the city – a return trip that is entirely unprofitable," Mr Campbell said.