ASHTEAD GROUP PLC ANNOUNCES EXTENDED SENIOR DEBT FACILITY

Ashtead Group plc ("Ashtead") announces that it has extended the maturity of a $1.3bn tranche of its asset based senior secured loan facility until November 2013. The extended tranche carries pricing of LIBOR plus 300bp to 375bp depending on leverage. At 31 October 2009, debt under the facility was £386m ($636m) whilst unused availability was $500m. The extended facility and all of the Group's debt is now effectively covenant free whilst availability exceeds $150m. Other terms and conditions of the facility are broadly unchanged.

Geoff Drabble, chief executive, commented:

"We continue to demonstrate that our financial structure is appropriate to all phases in the economic cycle. We are pleased with the support received from our senior secured lenders in agreeing this maturity extension. The resulting five year weighted average maturity across all our debt ensures that that our existing capital structure has the flexibility and strength required to enable our businesses to succeed and prosper in the years ahead."

As previously reported, Ashtead will announce its results for the second quarter and first half ended 31 October 2009 on Thursday 3 December.

<u>Contacts</u>:

Geoff Drabble	Chief executive	)	
Ian Robson	Finance director	)	020 7726 9700
Brian Hudspith	Maitland		020 7379 5151

<u>Notes to editors</u>

1. Ashtead's debt facilities comprise the asset based senior loan facility ("the facility") together with two senior secured note issues (one of $250m and one of $550m) which mature in August 2015 and August 2016 respectively. At 31 October 2009 it also had £5m of finance lease debt.
2. The previous facility which has now been amended and extended comprised a $1.5bn revolving facility and a $225m fully drawn term loan.
3. The amended facility now comprises two revolving tranches and the term loan. Ashtead has secured $1,327m in the extended revolving tranche maturing 22 November 2013. Until the original maturity date of 31 August 2011 Ashtead also has access to a second non-extending revolving tranche of $303m and the $225m term loan.
4. The interest rate grid on the $1.3bn extended tranche is reset with immediate effect to LIBOR plus 300bp to 375bp depending on the Group's debt to EBITDA leverage. The non extending tranches retain the pricing agreed in 2006 until they expire.
5. The amount of the facility which Ashtead can access is governed by a borrowing base with the calculations underpinning this being unchanged in the amended facility.
6. At 31 October 2009 debt under the asset based senior debt facility was £386m ($636m) whilst availability at the same date was $500m, substantially in excess of the revised $150m limit (previously $125m) above which all the Group's debt facilities are effectively covenant free.
7. There are also no changes to the financial covenants which apply if availability falls below $150m which are (i) debt to EBITDA before exceptionals must not exceed 4.0 times and (ii) the fixed charge ratio must exceed 1.1 times. Both covenants are measured at a fixed exchange rate to protect against the risk of currency fluctuations impacting covenanted performance.

8. Based on current LIBOR rates, the average interest rate applicable to drawings under the amended facility increases from 2.6% to 4.1%, whilst the Group’s annual net financing cost, based on the debt outstanding at 31 October 2009, rises by approximately £10m.
9. Including the two senior secured note issues and the outstanding finance lease debt, Ashtead’s average cost of debt is approximately 7.5% before and 5% after tax whilst its weighted average debt maturity exceeds 5 years.
10. The principal lenders under the extending facility are Bank of America, Wells Fargo, GE Capital, Deutsche Bank, LloydsTSB, Barclays, JP Morgan, RBS, UBS and Citi.