

## **Severe weather boiler and burst pipe claims remain below 2010 winter levels**

**10 February 2012 – While levels of boiler breakdown and burst pipe claims have seen significant increases during the recent poor weather, volumes remain below those experienced during the peak of the bad weather period at the end of 2010 according to AXA Assistance UK, a leading property and motor assistance provider (part of the global AXA Group),**

AXA Assistance's Home Emergency service which, is used by clients including Swinton and The Co-operative Insurance, managed a claim notification every 12 seconds at the peak of the snow and freezing conditions over the first four days of February, where temperatures dropped as low as -9°C in some parts of England. Heating related claims are three quarters the levels of the peak period in December 2010 and plumbing claims are just over half.

Kelly Ward, Sales & Marketing Director of AXA Assistance, said: "In times of bad weather, consumers' needs are pretty straightforward. They want to have the reassurance that their problem is going to be fixed to their satisfaction by a trusted and qualified provider who arrives within the agreed time and, with no surprises

"Last winter's severe weather created difficulties for some providers in this sector. We decided to place particular emphasis on meeting the specific demands these kinds of conditions cause. The investment in technology, staff training and utilising practices such as home working and, a focus on clear communication throughout the claims process meant we are able to respond effectively at these difficult times. During the peak period last weekend we were able to respond to calls in under 20 seconds to help reassure customers and initiate the deployment of our skilled network"

Ironically, Kelly experienced the Home Emergency service firsthand when the ground floor of his home was flooded with over 5cms of water following a burst pipe last week. Commenting on the response, Kelly said: “Communication and managing expectations are important factors in dealing with a claim efficiently and effectively. But the little touches can make all the difference to the customer experience. The plumber who attended my burst pipe claim provided very practical information on turning off the water supply, helping to mitigate the loss, as well as offering advice on dealing with leaks in the future.”

AXA Assistance’s Home Emergency service combines extensive property underwriting skills and strong service capabilities together with a bespoke technology platform to provide a competitively priced, added-value service.

The Home Emergency service contractor network covers the whole of the UK with a range of third party service providers operating on a nationwide and local level. AXA Assistance has assessed and selected network providers with proven track records in delivering responsive, high quality support and the ability to preserve customer satisfaction in times of high demand such as extreme weathers conditions.

The Home Emergency service is a core business line for AXA Assistance. The services and insurance products are underwritten by Inter Partner Assistance, the underwriting arm and a fully owned subsidiary of AXA Assistance.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

**Please refer to the company as AXA Assistance. The name should not be abbreviated to AXA**

### **About AXA Assistance UK Ltd**

In the UK, AXA Assistance has offered a wide range of assistance services since 1976 for a variety of international and national organizations such as insurance brokers, health and pharmaceutical entities, motor manufacturers, insurance companies, banks, etc. Its 24/7/365 service centres are operated from 2 offices – one in the UK and one in Ireland - by more than 360 coordinators entirely dedicated to delivering high quality services to customers. AXA Assistance aims to develop flexible and tailor-made solutions to better suit customers' needs and, moreover, can help retain customer loyalty. For more information on AXA Assistance UK Ltd please visit: [www.axa-assistance.co.uk](http://www.axa-assistance.co.uk). AXA Assistance UK is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority, firm number 439069.

### **About AXA Assistance Group**

AXA Assistance, founded in 1959, is a leading assistance company, with a turnover of €929 million in 2010, handling 6 million cases a year and employing more than 6250 people in more than 30 countries across five continents. AXA Assistance's headquarters are in Paris, France and it is a wholly owned subsidiary of AXA, one of the world's largest insurance groups. For more information on AXA Assistance please visit: [www.axa-assistance.com](http://www.axa-assistance.com).