

VICURON PHARMACEUTICALS INC
Form S-3
February 13, 2004
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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 13, 2004

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

VICURON PHARMACEUTICALS INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State of other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

2834
(Primary Standard Industrial
Classification Code Number)

04-3278032
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

455 South Gulph Road, Suite 305
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406
(610) 491-2200

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

George F. Horner III

President and Chief Executive Officer

Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc.

455 South Gulph Road, Suite 305

King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406

(610) 491-2200

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copy to:

Peter T. Healy, Esq.

O Melveny & Myers LLP

275 Battery Street, 26th Floor

San Francisco, California 94111

(415) 984-8700

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:

From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement.

If the only securities being registered on this form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. "

If any of the securities being registered on this form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box. x

If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

If this form is a post effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

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If delivery of the prospectus is expected to be made pursuant to Rule 434, please check the following box. x

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

| Title of Each Class of Shares To Be Registered | Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price(1) | Amount of Registration Fee(2) |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Common Stock, par value \$0.001 per share, including related rights to purchase Series A Junior Participated Preferred Stock(3) | | |
| Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share(3) | | |
| Depository Shares(4) | | |
| Warrants(5) | | |
| Debt Securities(6) | | |
| Total | \$ 200,000,000(7) | \$ 25,340.00 |

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- (1) The proposed maximum aggregate offering price per class of security will be determined from time to time by the registrant in connection with the issuance by the registrant of the securities registered hereunder and is not specified as to each class of security pursuant to General Instruction II.D. of Form S-3 under the Securities Act.
 - (2) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act. The registrant has submitted payment of the filing fee in the amount of \$24,121.24. Pursuant to Rule 457(p) of the Securities Act, the balance of the filing fee has been offset by the filing fee previously paid by the registrant in the amount of \$1,218.76 with respect to the unsold shares of common stock registered under the registrant's registration statement on Form S-3 (file no. 333-107140) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 17, 2003.
 - (3) Subject to note 7 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminable number of shares of common stock and preferred stock of the registrant as may be sold from time to time by the registrant. Pursuant to Rule 416 under the Securities Act, the shares being registered hereunder include such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock as may be issuable with respect to the shares being registered hereunder as a result of stock splits, stock dividends or similar transactions. Pursuant to Rule 457(i) under the Securities Act, the shares being registered hereunder include such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock as may be issuable upon conversion or exchange of any preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants or debt securities issued under this registration statement.
 - (4) Subject to note 7 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminable number of depositary shares of the registrant as may be sold from time to time by the registrant. Such depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to a deposit agreement. Pursuant to Rule 457(i) under the Securities Act, the depositary shares being registered hereunder include such indeterminate number of depositary shares as may be issuable upon conversion or exchange of any preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants or debt securities issued under this registration statement.
 - (5) Subject to note 7 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminable number of warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities of one or more series. Pursuant to Rule 457(i) under the Securities Act, the warrants being registered hereunder include such indeterminate number of warrants as may be issuable upon conversion or exchange of any preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities issued under this registration statement.
 - (6) Subject to note 7 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminable principal amount of debt securities of the registrant as may be sold from time to time by the registrant. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price shall be in such greater principal amount at maturity as shall result in aggregate gross proceeds to the registrant not to exceed \$200 million, less the gross proceeds attributable to any securities previously issued pursuant to this registration statement. Pursuant to Rule 457(i) under the Securities Act, the debt securities being registered hereunder include such indeterminate principal amount of debt securities as may be issuable upon conversion or exchange of any warrants issued under this registration statement.
 - (7) In no event will the aggregate offering price of all securities issued from time to time pursuant to this registration statement exceed \$200 million, excluding accrued interest, if any, on any debt securities issued under this registration statement. The securities registered hereunder may be sold separately or with other securities registered hereunder.
-

The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

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The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, dated , 2004

PROSPECTUS

\$200,000,000

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Depositary Shares

Debt Securities

Warrants

From time to time, we may sell any of the securities listed above.

We will provide the specific terms of these securities in one or more supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus, the information incorporated by reference and any prospectus supplement carefully before you invest.

Our common stock is quoted on the Nasdaq National Market and the Nuovo Mercato stock exchange in Italy under the symbol MICU.

The applicable prospectus supplement will contain information, where applicable, as to any other listing on the Nasdaq National Market or any securities exchange or market of the securities covered by the prospectus supplement.

Investing in our securities involves significant risks, which we describe in our quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2003 and in other documents that we subsequently file with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and which we will describe in supplements to this prospectus.

This prospectus may not be used to offer or sell any securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

We may sell the securities to or through underwriters or dealers, directly to purchasers or through agents designated from time to time. For additional information on the methods of sale, you should refer to the section entitled "Plan of Distribution" in this prospectus. If any underwriters are involved in the sale of any securities with respect to which this prospectus is being delivered, the names of such underwriters and any applicable discounts or commissions to which this prospectus is being delivered, the names of such underwriters and any applicable discounts or commissions and over-allotment options will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. The price to the public of such securities and the net proceeds we expect to receive from such sale will also be set forth in a prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is _____, 2004

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No dealer, salesperson or other person is authorized to give any information or to represent anything not contained in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. You must not rely on any unauthorized information or representations. This prospectus is an offer to sell only the securities offered hereby, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement is current only as of its date, and the information contained in any document incorporated by reference in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus or any prospectus supplement or any sale of a security.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission using a shelf registration process. Under the shelf process, we may sell common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, debt securities or warrants in one or more offerings up to an aggregate dollar amount of \$200 million. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell any securities under this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain more specific information about the terms of those securities. We may also add, update or change in a prospectus supplement any of the information contained in this prospectus or in documents we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus. This prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplements and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus, includes all material information relating to this offering. You should carefully read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under **Where You Can Find Additional Information** before buying securities in this offering.

Vicuron and our logo are trademarks of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. Other trademarks and trade names appearing in this prospectus are the property of their respective holders.

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SUMMARY

This summary provides an overview of selected information and does not contain all the information you should consider. You should carefully read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including the information under Risk Factors therein, together with the additional information described under Where You Can Find Additional Information before buying securities in this offering. When used in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, unless otherwise indicated, the terms Vicuron, we, us and our refer to Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries.

Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc.

We are a transatlantic biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery, development and marketing of drugs for the treatment of seriously ill patients, primarily in the hospital setting. We focus on seeking to develop antibiotics and antifungals that may have competitive advantages over existing products, such as greater potency, improved effectiveness against difficult to treat strains and reduced toxicity. Because the development process for anti-infective products is relatively efficient and well-defined, we believe the costs and time required to bring new anti-infective products to market can be significantly less than the time required to bring products to market in other major therapeutic categories.

We have a two-fold approach to product discovery, development and marketing. Our primary strategy is to focus on the discovery and development of proprietary products, concentrating on injectable antibiotic and antifungal products for the hospital market. We expect to market these products to hospitals in North America and selected European markets through our to be developed direct sales force, which we believe we can accomplish through a targeted and cost-effective sales and marketing infrastructure. Our product candidates target disease indications that represent markets where there is demand for new therapies.

Our secondary strategy is to collaborate with major pharmaceutical companies to discover and develop orally administered antibiotic and antifungal products for the non-hospital market. Major pharmaceutical companies are generally better suited to market these products, as these products require substantial expenditures for sales and marketing to reach their full market potential. Under our existing collaboration agreements, we are responsible for discovering the compounds and our collaborators are responsible for developing and marketing them. We expect to receive a combination of research funding, milestone payments and equity investments from our collaborators, as well as royalty fees if any products are commercialized.

Our discovery platform combines our proprietary expertise in the critical areas of functional genomics, mechanism-based rational drug design, high-throughput screening of our diversified library of microbial extracts, combinatorial chemistry, lead optimization and medicinal chemistry. We intend to leverage our platform to discover and supply lead compounds both for internal development and commercialization, in the case of hospital products, and for our pharmaceutical collaborations, in the case of community products.

We were incorporated in Delaware as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sepracor Inc. in 1995 and began operating as an independent company since 1996. On February 28, 2003, we completed the merger of Biosearch Italia S.p.A. with and into Vicuron, with Vicuron continuing as the surviving corporation. In March 2003, we changed our name from Versicor Inc. to Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. Our principal executive offices are located at 455 South Gulph Road, Suite 305, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406. Our telephone number is (610) 491-2200. Our website is <http://www.vicuron.com>. The information found on our website and on websites linked to it are not incorporated into or a part of this prospectus.

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The Securities We May Offer

We may offer shares of our common stock and preferred stock, depositary shares, various series of debt securities and warrants to purchase any of such securities with a total value of up to \$200 million from time to time under this prospectus at prices and on terms to be determined by market conditions at the time of offering. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we offer a type or series of securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will describe the specific amounts, prices and other important terms of the securities, including, to the extent applicable:

designation or classification;

aggregate principal amount or aggregate offering price;

maturity;

original issue discount, if any;

rates and times of payment of interest, dividends or other payments, if any;

redemption, conversion, exchange, settlement or sinking fund terms, if any;

conversion, exchange or settlement prices or rates, if any, and, if applicable, any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the conversion, exchange or settlement prices or rates and in the securities or other property receivable upon conversion, exchange or settlement;

ranking;

restrictive covenants, if any;

voting or other rights, if any; and

important federal income tax considerations.

The prospectus supplement also may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in documents we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

This prospectus may not be used to offer or sell any securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

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We may sell the securities directly to or through underwriters, dealers or agents. We, and our underwriters or agents, reserve the right to accept or reject all or part of any proposed purchase of securities. If we do offer securities through underwriters or agents, we will include in the applicable prospectus supplement:

the names of those underwriters or agents;

applicable fees, discounts and commissions to be paid to them;

details regarding over-allotment options, if any; and

the net proceeds to us.

Common Stock. We may issue shares of our common stock from time to time. Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote per share for the election of directors and on all other matters that require stockholder approval. Subject to any preferential rights of any outstanding preferred stock, in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in the assets remaining after payment of liabilities and the liquidation preferences of any outstanding preferred stock. Our common stock does not carry any preemptive rights enabling a holder to subscribe for, or receive shares of, any class of our common stock or any other securities convertible into shares of any class of our common stock, or any redemption rights.

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Preferred Stock. We may issue shares of our preferred stock from time to time, in one or more series. Under our fourth restated certificate of incorporation, our board of directors has the authority, without further action by stockholders, to designate up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series and to fix the rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications and restrictions granted to or imposed upon the preferred stock, including dividend rights, conversion rights, voting rights, rights and terms of redemption, liquidation preference and sinking fund terms, any or all of which may be greater than the rights of the common stock. To date, our board of directors has designated 1,000,000 of the 5,000,000 authorized shares of preferred stock as series A junior participating preferred stock, which series is described in greater detail in this prospectus under **Description of Capital Stock Rights Plan**.

We will fix the rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications and restrictions of the preferred stock of each series that we sell under this prospectus and applicable prospectus supplements in the certificate of designation relating to that series. We will incorporate by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part the form of any certificate of designation that describes the terms of the series of preferred stock we are offering before the issuance of the related series of preferred stock. We urge you to read the prospectus supplements related to the series of preferred stock being offered, as well as the complete certificate of designation that contains the terms of the applicable series of preferred stock.

Depository Shares. We may elect to offer fractional shares of preferred stock rather than full shares of preferred stock and, in that event, will issue receipts for depository shares. Each of these depository shares will represent a fraction, which will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, of a share of the applicable series of preferred stock.

Any depository shares that we sell under this prospectus will be evidenced by depository receipts issued under a deposit agreement between us and a depository with whom we deposit the shares of the applicable series of preferred stock that underlie the depository shares that are sold. A form of deposit agreement, including a form of depository receipt, has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and supplements to those forms containing other terms of any depository shares that we sell under this prospectus will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. We urge you to read the prospectus supplements related to any depository shares being sold, as well as the complete deposit agreement and depository receipt.

Debt Securities. We may issue debt securities from time to time, in one or more series, as either senior or subordinated debt or as senior or subordinated convertible debt. The senior debt securities will rank equally with any other unsubordinated debt that we may have and may be secured or unsecured. The subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent and in the manner described in the instrument governing the debt, to all or some portion of our indebtedness. Any convertible debt securities that we issue will be convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or other securities of ours. Conversion may be mandatory or at your option and would be at prescribed conversion rates.

The debt securities will be issued under one or more documents called indentures, which are contracts between us and a trustee for the holders of the debt securities. In this prospectus, we have summarized certain general features of the debt securities. We urge you, however, to read the prospectus supplements related to the series of debt securities being offered, as well as the complete indentures that contain the terms of the debt securities. Indentures have been filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and supplemental indentures and forms of debt securities containing the terms of debt securities being offered will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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Warrants. We may issue warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares and/or debt securities in one or more series, from time to time. We may issue warrants independently or together with common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares and/or debt securities, and the warrants may be attached to or separate from those securities.

The warrants will be evidenced by warrant certificates issued under one or more warrant agreements, which are contracts between us and an agent for the holders of the warrants. In this prospectus, we have summarized certain general features of the warrants. We urge you, however, to read the prospectus supplements related to the series of warrants being offered, as well as the complete warrant agreements and warrant certificates that contain the terms of the warrants. Forms of warrant agreements and warrant certificates relating to warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares and debt securities have been filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and complete warrant agreements and warrant certificates containing the terms of the warrants being offered will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Financial Ratios

Our ratio of earnings to fixed charges and the ratio of our combined fixed charges and preference dividends to earnings for the years ended December 31, 1998 through 2002 and the nine months ended September 30, 2003 are set forth in the table below.

| | Years Ended December 31, | | | | | Nine Months Ended |
|--|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------------------|
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | September 30, |
| | | | | | | 2003 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges | | | | | | |
| Ratio of combined fixed charges and preference dividends to earnings | | | | | | |

The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is computed by dividing earnings, by fixed charges. Earnings consist of loss from continuing operations before income taxes, plus fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and that portion of rental payments under operating leases we believe to be representative of interest. Earnings were insufficient to cover fixed charges by \$151.9 million for the nine months ended September 30, 2003, and \$15.1 million, \$67.4 million, \$18.8 million, \$32.8 million and \$48.1 million for the years ended December 31, 1998 through 2002, respectively.

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RISK FACTORS

Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific risks discussed under **Risk Factors** in the applicable prospectus supplement, together with all of the other information appearing in this prospectus or incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, in light of your particular investment objectives and financial circumstances.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission that are incorporated by reference herein contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. All statements, other than statements of historical facts included in this prospectus, regarding our strategy, future operations, financial position, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management are forward-looking statements. These statements can often be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as expects, anticipates, believes, intends, will, or the negative of such terms or other similar types of expressions, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words.

The forward-looking statements are based on our current expectations, assumptions, estimates and projections about our business and our industry, and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause our or our industry's results, levels of activity, performance or achievement to be materially different from any future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements expressed or implied in or contemplated by such forward-looking statements. In addition, the results of our previous clinical trials are not necessarily indicative of future clinical trials results. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking statements as a result of several factors more fully described under the caption **Risk Factors** in our quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2003, in the section entitled **Risk Factors** in supplements to this prospectus and elsewhere in this prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference herein. The forward-looking statements made in this prospectus relate only to events as of the date on which the statements are made. We undertake no obligation to update publicly any forward-looking statements for any reason, even if new information becomes available or other events occur in the future.

This prospectus and the information incorporated by reference herein contains statistics and other data that have been obtained from, or compiled from, information made available by third parties. These statistics and other data have not been prepared by us and we accept no responsibility for the accuracy of that information.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We will retain broad discretion over the use of the net proceeds from the sale of our securities offered hereby. Except as described in any prospectus supplement, we currently anticipate using the net proceeds from the sale of our securities hereby primarily for clinical development of drug candidates, as well as commercialization activities and general corporate purposes, including working capital and research expenses. In addition, we may use some of the net proceeds to hire additional personnel. The amounts and timing of the expenditures may vary significantly depending on numerous factors, such as the progress of our research and development efforts, technological advances and the competitive environment for our products. We also might use a portion of the net proceeds to acquire or invest in complementary businesses, products and technologies.

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Pending the use of the net proceeds, we intend to invest the net proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing, investment-grade securities.

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DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

Our authorized capital stock consists of 100,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.001 per share, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share, of which 1,000,000 shares have been designated as series A junior participating preferred stock. As of February 10, 2004, there were 53,991,877 shares of common stock outstanding held of record by 86 stockholders and no shares of preferred stock outstanding.

Common Stock

The holders of common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of the stockholders and do not have cumulative voting rights. Accordingly, holders of a majority of the shares of common stock entitled to vote in any election of directors may elect all of the directors standing for election. Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding shares of preferred stock, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably such dividends as may be declared by the board of directors out of funds legally available for distribution. Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities and the liquidation preferences of any outstanding shares of preferred stock. Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights and no right to convert their common stock into any other securities. There are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to our common stock. All outstanding shares of our common stock are fully paid and non-assessable.

Preferred Stock

Pursuant to our fourth restated certificate of incorporation, our board of directors has the authority, without further action by the stockholders, to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of our preferred stock in one or more series. Our board of directors shall determine the rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications and restrictions of the preferred stock, including dividend rights, conversion rights, voting rights, terms of redemption, liquidation preferences, sinking fund terms and the number of shares constituting any series or the designation of any series. Our board has designated 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock as series A junior participating preferred stock.

The issuance of preferred stock could harm the voting power of holders of our common stock, and the likelihood that holders of our preferred stock will receive dividend payments and payments upon liquidation may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of our company, which could depress the trading price of the securities offered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement.

Warrants

As of February 10, 2004, warrants to purchase 163,912 shares of common stock at \$4.72 per share were outstanding. The warrants expire on August 7, 2005. The warrants contain anti-dilution provisions providing for adjustments in the exercise price and the number of shares underlying the warrants upon the occurrence of certain events, including any recapitalization, reclassification, stock dividend, stock split, stock combination or similar transaction. The holders of the warrants have registration rights with respect to the shares of our common stock issuable upon their exercise.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Provisions of Delaware Law and Our Charter Documents

Delaware Takeover Statute. We are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. In general, the statute prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which such person became an interested stockholder. For purposes of Section 203, a business combination includes a merger, asset sale or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder, and an interested stockholder is a

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person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock. A Delaware corporation may opt out of Section 203 with an express provision in its original certificate of incorporation or an express provision in its certificate of incorporation or bylaws resulting from amendments approved by the holders of at least a majority of the corporation's outstanding voting shares. We have not opted out of the provisions of Section 203.

Charter Documents. Our fourth restated certificate of incorporation provides that our board of directors is divided into three classes of directors, with each class serving a staggered three-year term. The classification system of electing directors may tend to discourage a third party from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain control of Vicuron and may maintain the incumbency of the board of directors, as the classification of the board of directors generally increases the difficulty of replacing a majority of the directors. Additionally, our fourth restated certificate of incorporation provides that:

the authorized number of directors may be changed only by resolution of our board of directors;

all actions permitted to be taken by our stockholders must be effected at a duly called annual or special meeting of stockholders and may not be effected by a consent in writing; and

the stockholders may amend the bylaws or certain provisions of the restated certificate of incorporation only with the affirmative vote of 75% of our capital stock.

These provisions could discourage potential acquisition proposals and could delay or prevent a change in control of Vicuron. These provisions are designed to reduce our vulnerability to an unsolicited acquisition proposal and to discourage certain tactics that may be used in proxy fights. However, such provisions could have the effect of discouraging others from making tender offers for our shares and, as a consequence, they also may inhibit fluctuations in the market price of our shares that could result from actual or rumored takeover attempts. Such provisions also may have the effect of preventing changes in our management.

Our amended and restated bylaws provide that any action required or permitted to be taken by our stockholders at an annual meeting or special meeting of stockholders may only be taken if each stockholder is given proper advance notice of the action. Our amended and restated bylaws further provide that special meetings of stockholders may only be called by a majority of our board of directors, our chairman of the board of directors or our president. The foregoing provisions could have the effect of delaying until the next stockholders meeting stockholder actions which are favored by the holders of a majority of our outstanding voting securities.

Rights Plan

We have 1,000,000 shares of series A junior participating preferred stock authorized and reserved for issuance in connection with our rights plan set forth in our Shareholder Rights Agreement dated as of June 28, 2001, as amended, with American Stock Transfer and Trust Company, as rights agent. A copy of our Shareholder Rights Agreement has been incorporated by reference as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. Each outstanding share of our common stock has one preferred stock purchase right. The rights expire on July 9, 2011 unless exchanged or redeemed prior to that date. Our board may extend the expiration date.

Generally, if any person or group acquires 15% or more of our common stock (unless such person or group has been approved by our board), the rights holders will be entitled to receive upon exercise of a preferred stock purchase right, the number of shares of common stock that, at that

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time, have a market value equal to twice the purchase price of the right. The shares of preferred stock acquired upon exercise of a purchase right are not redeemable and are entitled to preferential quarterly dividends. They are also entitled to preferential rights in the event of liquidation. Finally, if any business combination occurs in which shares of our common stock are exchanged for shares of another company, each share of preferred stock acquired upon exercise of a purchase right will be entitled to receive 100 times the amount received per share of our common stock.

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If we are acquired in a business combination, the purchase rights holders will be entitled to acquire, for the purchase price, the number of shares of common stock of the acquiring corporation that, at the time, have a market value equal to twice the purchase price of the right. Our board has the right to redeem the purchase rights in certain circumstances for \$0.01 per share, subject to adjustment.

The rights plan is designed to protect our stockholders in the event of unsolicited offers to acquire us and other coercive takeover tactics, which, in our board's opinion, would impair its ability to represent our stockholders' interests. The rights plan may make an unsolicited takeover more difficult or less likely to occur or may prevent a takeover, even though a takeover may offer our stockholders the opportunity to sell their stock at a price above the prevailing market rate and may be favored by a majority of our stockholders.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer and Trust Company. Its address is 59 Maiden Lane, Plaza Level, New York, New York 10038 and its telephone number is (718) 921-8124.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

We may offer fractional shares of preferred stock rather than full shares of preferred stock, and, in that event, we will issue receipts for depositary shares. Each of these depositary shares will represent a fraction, which will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, of a share of the applicable series of preferred stock.

The shares of any series of preferred stock underlying any depositary shares that we may sell under this prospectus will be deposited under a deposit agreement between us and a depositary selected by us. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each holder of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fraction of a share of the preferred stock underlying the depositary share, to all of the rights, preferences and privileges, and be subject to the qualifications and restrictions, of the preferred stock underlying that depositary share.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued under a deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to the holders of the depositary shares that are sold in the applicable offering. A form of deposit agreement, including a form of depositary receipt, has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and supplements to those forms containing other terms of any depositary shares that we sell under this prospectus will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from documents we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The following description of the material terms of the deposit agreement, the depositary shares and the depositary receipts is only a summary. We urge you to read the prospectus supplements relating to any depositary shares that are sold under this prospectus, as well as the complete deposit agreement and depositary receipt.

Form. Pending the preparation of definitive depositary receipts, the depositary may, upon our written order, issue temporary depositary receipts substantially identical to the definitive depositary receipts but not in definitive form. These temporary depositary receipts entitle their holders to all of the rights of definitive depositary receipts. Temporary depositary receipts will then be exchangeable for definitive depositary receipts at our expense.

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Dividends and Other Distributions. The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received with respect to the underlying preferred stock to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by those holders.

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If there is a distribution other than in cash, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by those holders, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to do so. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to those holders in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by them.

Withdrawal of Underlying Preferred Stock. Except as otherwise provided in a prospectus supplement, holders may surrender depositary receipts at the principal office of the depositary and, upon payment of any unpaid amount due to the depositary, be entitled to receive the number of whole shares of underlying preferred stock and all money and other property represented by the related depositary shares. We will not issue any partial shares of preferred stock. If the holder delivers depositary receipts evidencing a number of depositary shares that represent more than a whole number of shares of preferred stock, the depositary will issue a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares to the holder.

Redemption of Depositary Shares. If the preferred stock underlying any depositary shares we may sell under this prospectus is subject to redemption, the depositary shares will be redeemed from the proceeds received by the depositary resulting from any such redemption, in whole or in part, of that underlying preferred stock. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable with respect to the underlying preferred stock. Whenever we redeem shares of underlying preferred stock that are held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem, as of the same redemption date, the number of depositary shares representing the shares of underlying preferred stock so redeemed. If fewer than all of the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or proportionately, as may be determined by the depositary.

Voting. Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which holders of the preferred stock underlying any depositary shares that we may sell under this prospectus are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in the notice to the record holders of the depositary shares. Each record holder of the depositary shares on the record date, which will be the same date as the record date for the underlying preferred stock, will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of the underlying preferred stock represented by the holder's depositary shares. The depositary will then try, as far as practicable, to vote the number of shares of preferred stock underlying those depositary shares in accordance with those instructions, and we will agree to take all reasonable actions which may be deemed necessary by the depositary to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary will not vote the underlying preferred stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions with respect to the depositary shares representing such preferred stock.

Conversion of Preferred Stock. If the prospectus supplement relating to any depositary shares that we may sell under this prospectus states that the underlying preferred stock is convertible into our common stock or other securities, the following will apply. The depositary shares, as such, will not be convertible into any of our securities. Rather, any holder of the depositary shares may surrender the related depositary receipts to the depositary with written instructions to instruct us to cause conversion of the preferred stock represented by the depositary shares into or for whole shares of our common stock or other securities, as applicable. Upon receipt of those instructions and any amounts payable by the holder in connection with the conversion, we will cause the conversion using the same procedures as those provided for conversion of the underlying preferred stock. If only some of a holder's depositary shares are converted, a new depositary receipt or receipts will be issued to the holder for any depositary shares not converted.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement. The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may at any time be amended by agreement between us and the depositary. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary shares will not be effective until 90 days after notice of that amendment has been given to the holders. Each holder of depositary shares at the time any amendment becomes effective shall be deemed to consent and

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agree to that amendment and to be bound by the deposit agreement as so amended. The deposit agreement may be terminated by us or by the depositary only if all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed or converted into any other securities into which the underlying preferred stock is convertible or there has been a final distribution, including to holders of depositary receipts, of the underlying preferred stock in connection with our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Charges of Depositary. We will pay all charges of the depositary, except for taxes and governmental charges and other charges as are expressly provided for in the deposit agreement to be for the account of the holders of depositary shares or persons other than ourselves who may deposit any underlying preferred stock with the depositary.

Reports. The depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all notices and reports from us that we deliver to the depositary and that we are required to furnish to the holders of the underlying preferred stock.

Limitation on Liability. Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if either of us is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond our control in performing our respective obligations under the deposit agreement. Our obligations and those of the depositary will be limited to performance of our respective duties under the deposit agreement without, in our case, negligence or bad faith or, in the case of the depositary, negligence or willful misconduct. We and the depositary may rely upon advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by persons presenting the underlying preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed by us in good faith to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary. The depositary may resign at any time by delivering notice to us of its election to resign. We may remove the depositary at any time. Any resignation or removal will take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of the appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50 million.

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DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will generally apply to any future debt securities we may offer under this prospectus, we will describe the particular terms of any debt securities that we may offer in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any debt securities we offer under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms we describe below.

We will issue the senior notes under the senior indenture which we will enter into with the trustee named in the senior indenture. We will issue the subordinated notes under the subordinated indenture which we will enter into with the trustee named in the subordinated indenture. We have filed forms of these documents as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We use the term "indentures" to refer to both the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture.

The indentures will be qualified under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, or the Trust Indenture Act. We use the term "debenture trustee" to refer to either the senior trustee or the subordinated trustee, as applicable.

The following summaries of material provisions of the senior notes, the subordinated notes and the indentures are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the indenture applicable to a particular series of debt securities. We urge you to read the applicable prospectus supplements related to the debt securities that we sell under this prospectus, as well as the complete indentures that contain the terms of the debt securities. Except as we may otherwise indicate, the terms of the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture are identical.

General

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms relating to a series of debt securities, including:

the title;

the principal amount being offered, and, if a series, the total amount authorized and the total amount outstanding;

any limit on the amount that may be issued;

whether or not we will issue the series of debt securities in global form and, if so, the terms and who the depositary will be;

the maturity date;

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the principal amount due at maturity, and whether the debt securities will be issued with any original issue discount;

whether and under what circumstances, if any, we will pay additional amounts on any debt securities held by a person who is not a United States person for tax purposes, and whether we can redeem the debt securities if we have to pay such additional amounts;

the annual interest rate, which may be fixed or variable, or the method for determining the rate, the date interest will begin to accrue, the dates interest will be payable and the regular record dates for interest payment dates or the method for determining such dates;

whether or not the debt securities will be secured or unsecured, and the terms of any secured debt;

the terms of the subordination of any series of subordinated debt;

the place where payments will be payable;

restrictions on transfer, sale or other assignment, if any;

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our right, if any, to defer payment of interest and the maximum length of any such deferral period;

the date, if any, after which, the conditions upon which, and the price at which we may, at our option, redeem the series of debt securities pursuant to any optional or provisional redemption provisions, and any other applicable terms of those redemption provisions;

provisions for a sinking fund, purchase or other analogous fund, if any;

the date, if any, on which, and the price at which we are obligated, pursuant to any mandatory sinking fund or analogous fund provisions or otherwise, to redeem, or at the holder's option to purchase, the series of debt securities;

whether the indenture will restrict our ability and/or the ability of our subsidiaries to:

incur additional indebtedness;

issue additional securities;

create liens;

pay dividends and make distributions in respect of our capital stock and the capital stock of our subsidiaries;

redeem capital stock;

place restrictions on our subsidiaries' ability to pay dividends, make distributions or transfer assets;

make investments or other restricted payments;

sell or otherwise dispose of assets;

enter into sale-leaseback transactions;

engage in transactions with stockholders and affiliates;

issue or sell stock of our subsidiaries; or

effect a consolidation or merger;

whether the indenture will require us to maintain any interest coverage, fixed charge, cash flow-based, asset-based or other financial ratios;

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a discussion of any material or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the debt securities;

information describing any book-entry features;

the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any;

the denominations in which we will issue the series of debt securities, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;

if other than dollars, the currency in which the series of debt securities will be denominated; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the debt securities, including any events of default that are in addition to those described in this prospectus or any covenants provided with respect to the debt securities that are in addition to those described above, and any terms which may be required by us or advisable under applicable laws or regulations or advisable in connection with the marketing of the debt securities.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

We will set forth in the prospectus supplement the terms on which a series of debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for common stock or other securities of ours or a third party, including the conversion or exchange rate, as applicable, or how it will be calculated, and the applicable conversion or

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exchange period. We will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. We may include provisions pursuant to which the number of our securities or the securities of a third party that the holders of the series of debt securities receive upon conversion or exchange would, under the circumstances described in those provisions, be subject to adjustment, or pursuant to which those holders would, under those circumstances, receive other property upon conversion or exchange, for example in the event of our merger or consolidation with another entity.

Consolidation, Merger or Sale

The indentures in the forms initially filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part do not contain any covenant which restricts our ability to merge or consolidate, or sell, convey, transfer or otherwise dispose of all or substantially all of our assets. However, any successor of ours or acquiror of such assets must assume all of our obligations under the indentures and the debt securities.

If the debt securities are convertible for our other securities, the person with whom we consolidate or merge or to whom we sell all of our property must make provisions for the conversion of the debt securities into securities which the holders of the debt securities would have received if they had converted the debt securities before the consolidation, merger or sale.

Events of Default Under the Indenture

The following are events of default under the indentures with respect to any series of debt securities that we may issue:

if we fail to pay interest when due and payable and our failure continues for 90 days and the time for payment has not been extended or deferred;

if we fail to pay the principal, or premium, if any, when due and payable and the time for payment has not been extended or delayed;

if we fail to observe or perform any other covenant contained in the debt securities or the indentures, other than a covenant specifically relating to another series of debt securities, and our failure continues for 90 days after we receive notice from the debenture trustee or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the applicable series; and

if specified events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occur.

If an event of default with respect to debt securities of any series occurs and is continuing, other than an event of default specified in the last bullet point above, the debenture trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series, by notice to us in writing, and to the debenture trustee if notice is given by such holders, may declare the unpaid principal of, premium, if any, and accrued interest, if any, due and payable immediately. If an event of default specified in the last bullet point above occurs with respect to us, the principal amount of and accrued interest, if any, of each issue of debt securities then outstanding shall be due and payable without any notice or other action on the part of the debenture trustee or any holder.

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The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of an affected series may waive any default or event of default with respect to the series and its consequences, except defaults or events of default regarding payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest, unless we have cured the default or event of default in accordance with the indenture.

Subject to the terms of the indentures, if an event of default under an indenture shall occur and be continuing, the debenture trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under such indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders of the applicable series of debt securities, unless such

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holders have offered the debenture trustee reasonable indemnity. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the debenture trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the debenture trustee, with respect to the debt securities of that series, provided that:

the direction so given by the holder is not in conflict with any law or the applicable indenture; and

subject to its duties under the Trust Indenture Act, the debenture trustee need not take any action that might involve it in personal liability or might be unduly prejudicial to the holders not involved in the proceeding.

A holder of the debt securities of any series will only have the right to institute a proceeding under the indentures or to appoint a receiver or trustee, or to seek other remedies if:

the holder has given written notice to the debenture trustee of a continuing event of default with respect to that series;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and such holders have offered reasonable indemnity to the debenture trustee to institute the proceeding as trustee; and

the debenture trustee does not institute the proceeding, and does not receive from the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series other conflicting directions within 90 days after the notice, request and offer.

These limitations do not apply to a suit instituted by a holder of debt securities if we default in the payment of the principal, premium, if any, or interest on, the debt securities.

We will periodically file statements with the debenture trustee regarding our compliance with specified covenants in the indentures.

Modification of Indenture; Waiver

We and the debenture trustee may change an indenture without the consent of any holders with respect to specific matters, including:

to fix any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency in the indenture;

to comply with the provisions described above under Consolidation, Merger or Sale;

to comply with any requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission in connection with the qualification of any indenture under the Trust Indenture Act;

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to evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment hereunder by a successor trustee;

to provide for uncertificated debt securities and to make all appropriate changes for such purpose;

to add to, delete from, or revise the conditions, limitations and restrictions on the authorized amount, terms or purposes of issuance, authorization and delivery of debt securities of any series;

to add to our covenants such new covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions for the protection of the holders, to make the occurrence, or the occurrence and the continuance, of a default in any such additional covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions an event of default, or to surrender any of our rights or powers under the indenture; or

to change anything that does not harm the interests of any holder of debt securities of any series.

In addition, under the indentures, the rights of holders of a series of debt securities may be changed by us and the debenture trustee with the written consent of the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal

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amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series that is affected. However, we and the debenture trustee may only make the following changes with the consent of each holder of any outstanding debt securities affected:

extending the fixed maturity of the series of debt securities;

reducing the principal amount, reducing the rate of or extending the time of payment of interest, or reducing any premium payable upon the redemption of any debt securities; or

reducing the percentage of debt securities, the holders of which are required to consent to any supplemental indenture.

Discharge

Each indenture provides that we can elect to be discharged from our obligations with respect to one or more series of debt securities, except for obligations to:

register the transfer or exchange of debt securities of the series;

replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities of the series;

maintain paying agencies;

hold monies for payment in trust;

recover excess money held by the debenture trustee;

compensate and indemnify the debenture trustee; and

appoint any successor trustee.

In order to exercise our rights to be discharged, we must deposit with the debenture trustee money or government obligations sufficient to pay all the principal of, any premium, if any, and interest on, the debt securities of the series on the dates payments are due.

Form, Exchange and Transfer

We will issue the debt securities of each series only in fully registered form without coupons and, unless we otherwise specify in the applicable prospectus supplement, in denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof. The indentures provide that we may issue debt securities

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of a series in temporary or permanent global form and as book-entry securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company or another depository named by us and identified in a prospectus supplement with respect to that series. See [Legal Ownership of Securities](#) for a further description of the terms relating to any book-entry securities.

At the option of the holder, subject to the terms of the indentures and the limitations applicable to global securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement, the holder of the debt securities of any series can exchange the debt securities for other debt securities of the same series, in any authorized denomination and of like tenor and aggregate principal amount.

Subject to the terms of the indentures and the limitations applicable to global securities set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, holders of the debt securities may present the debt securities for exchange or for registration of transfer, duly endorsed or with the form of transfer endorsed thereon duly executed if so required by us or the security registrar, at the office of the security registrar or at the office of any transfer agent designated by us for this purpose. Unless otherwise provided in the debt securities that the holder presents for transfer or exchange, we will make no service charge for any registration of transfer or exchange, but we may require payment of any taxes or other governmental charges.

We will name in the applicable prospectus supplement the security registrar, and any transfer agent in addition to the security registrar, that we initially designate for any debt securities. We may at any time designate

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additional transfer agents or rescind the designation of any transfer agent or approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of each series.

If we elect to redeem the debt securities of any series, we will not be required to:

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange any debt securities of any series being redeemed in part during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any debt securities that may be selected for redemption and ending at the close of business on the day of the mailing; or

register the transfer of or exchange any debt securities so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt securities we are redeeming in part.

Information Concerning the Debenture Trustee

The debenture trustee, other than during the occurrence and continuance of an event of default under an indenture, undertakes to perform only those duties as are specifically set forth in the applicable indenture. Upon an event of default under an indenture, the debenture trustee must use the same degree of care as a prudent person would exercise or use in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to this provision, the debenture trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers given it by the indentures at the request of any holder of debt securities unless it is offered reasonable security and indemnity against the costs, expenses and liabilities that it might incur.

Payment and Paying Agents

Unless we otherwise indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will make payment of the interest on any debt securities on any interest payment date to the person in whose name the debt securities, or one or more predecessor securities, are registered at the close of business on the regular record date for the interest.

We will pay principal of and any premium and interest on the debt securities of a particular series at the office of the paying agents designated by us, except that, unless we otherwise indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may make interest payments by check which we will mail to the holder or by wire transfer to certain holders. Unless we otherwise indicate in a prospectus supplement, we will designate an office or agency of the debenture trustee in the city of New York as our sole paying agent for payments with respect to debt securities of each series. We will name in the applicable prospectus supplement any other paying agents that we initially designate for the debt securities of a particular series. We will maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of a particular series.

All money we pay to a paying agent or the debenture trustee for the payment of the principal of or any premium or interest on any debt securities which remains unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal, premium or interest has become due and payable will be repaid to us, and the holder of the debt security thereafter may look only to us for payment thereof.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the state of New York, except to the extent that the Trust Indenture Act is applicable.

Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities

The subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in priority of payment to certain of our other indebtedness to the extent described in a prospectus supplement. The indentures in the forms initially filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part do not limit the amount of indebtedness which we may incur, including senior indebtedness or subordinated indebtedness, and do not limit us from issuing any other debt, including secured debt or unsecured debt.

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DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer under this prospectus, which consist of warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares and/or debt securities in one or more series. Warrants may be offered independently or together with our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares and/or debt securities offered by any prospectus supplement, and may be attached to or separate from those securities. While the terms we have summarized below will generally apply to any future warrants we may offer under this prospectus, we will describe the particular terms of any warrants that we may offer in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any warrants we offer under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms we describe below.

We will issue the warrants under a warrant agreement which we will enter into with a warrant agent to be selected by us. We have filed forms of the warrant agreements and the related warrant certificates for each type of warrant we may offer under this prospectus as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We use the term *warrant agreement* to refer to any of these warrant agreements. We use the term *warrant agent* to refer to the warrant agent under any of these warrant agreements. The warrant agent will act solely as an agent of ours in connection with the warrants and will not act as an agent for the holders or beneficial owners of the warrants.

The following summaries of material provisions of the warrants and the warrant agreements are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the warrant agreement applicable to a particular series of warrants. We urge you to read the applicable prospectus supplements related to the warrants that we sell under this prospectus, as well as the complete warrant agreements that contain the terms of the warrants.

General

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms relating to a series of warrants. If warrants for the purchase of debt securities are offered, the prospectus supplement will describe the following terms, to the extent applicable:

the offering price and the aggregate number of warrants offered;

the currencies in which the warrants are being offered;

the designation, aggregate principal amount, currencies, denominations and terms of the series of debt securities that can be purchased if a holder exercises a warrant;

the designation and terms of any series of debt securities with which the warrants are being offered and the number of warrants offered with each such debt security;

the date on and after which the holder of the warrants can transfer them separately from the related series of debt securities;

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the principal amount of the series of debt securities that can be purchased if a holder exercises a warrant and the price at which and currencies in which such principal amount may be purchased upon exercise;

the terms of any rights to redeem or call the warrants;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants begins and the date on which such right expires;

federal income tax consequences of holding or exercising the warrants; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the warrants.

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Warrants for the purchase of debt securities will be in registered form only.

If warrants for the purchase of our common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares are offered, the prospectus supplement will describe the following terms, to the extent applicable:

the offering price and the aggregate number of warrants offered;

the total number of shares that can be purchased if a holder of the warrants exercises them and, in the case of warrants for preferred stock or depositary shares, the designation, total number and terms of the series of preferred stock that can be purchased upon exercise or that are underlying the depositary shares that can be purchased upon exercise;

the designation and terms of any series of preferred stock or depositary shares with which the warrants are being offered and the number of warrants being offered with each share of common stock, preferred stock or depositary share;

the date on and after which the holder of the warrants can transfer them separately from the related common stock or series of preferred stock or depositary shares;

the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock or depositary shares that can be purchased if a holder exercises the warrant and the price at which such common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares may be purchased upon exercise, including, if applicable, any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the exercise price and in the securities or other property receivable upon exercise;

the terms of any rights to redeem or call, or accelerate the expiration of, the warrants;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants begins and the date on which that right expires;

federal income tax consequences of holding or exercising the warrants; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the warrants.

Warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares will be in registered form only.

A holder of warrant certificates may exchange them for new certificates of different denominations, present them for registration of transfer and exercise them at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Until any warrants to purchase debt securities are exercised, the holder of the warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities that can be purchased upon exercise, including any rights to receive payments of principal, premium or interest on the underlying debt securities or to enforce covenants in the applicable indenture. Until any warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares are exercised, holders of the warrants will not have any rights of holders of the underlying common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, including any rights to receive dividends or to exercise any voting rights, except to the extent set forth under **Warrant Adjustments** below.

Exercise of Warrants

Each holder of a warrant is entitled to purchase the principal amount of debt securities or number of shares of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as the case may be, at the exercise price described in the applicable prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the day when the right to exercise terminates (or a later date if we extend the time for exercise), unexercised warrants will become void.

A holder of warrants may exercise them by following the general procedure outlined below:

delivering to the warrant agent the payment required by the applicable prospectus supplement to purchase the underlying security;

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properly completing and signing the reverse side of the warrant certificate representing the warrants; and

delivering the warrant certificate representing the warrants to the warrant agent within five business days of the warrant agent receiving payment of the exercise price.

If you comply with the procedures described above, your warrants will be considered to have been exercised when the warrant agent receives payment of the exercise price, subject to the transfer books for the securities issuable upon exercise of the warrant not being closed on such date. After you have completed those procedures and subject to the foregoing, we will, as soon as practicable, issue and deliver to you the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares that you purchased upon exercise. If you exercise fewer than all of the warrants represented by a warrant certificate, a new warrant certificate will be issued to you for the unexercised amount of warrants. Holders of warrants will be required to pay any tax or governmental charge that may be imposed in connection with transferring the underlying securities in connection with the exercise of the warrants.

Amendments and Supplements to the Warrant Agreements

We may amend or supplement a warrant agreement without the consent of the holders of the applicable warrants to cure ambiguities in the warrant agreement, to cure or correct a defective provision in the warrant agreement, or to provide for other matters under the warrant agreement that we and the warrant agent deem necessary or desirable, so long as, in each case, such amendments or supplements do not harm the interests of the holders of the warrants.

Warrant Adjustments

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement states otherwise, the exercise price of, and the number of securities covered by, a common stock warrant, preferred stock warrant or depositary share warrant will be adjusted proportionately if we subdivide or combine our common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable. In addition, unless the prospectus supplement states otherwise, if we, without payment therefor:

issue capital stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for common stock or preferred stock, or any rights to subscribe for, purchase or otherwise acquire any of the foregoing, as a dividend or distribution to holders of our common stock or preferred stock;

pay any cash to holders of our common stock or preferred stock other than a cash dividend paid out of our current or retained earnings or other than in accordance with the terms of the preferred stock;

issue any evidence of our indebtedness or rights to subscribe for or purchase our indebtedness to holders of our common stock or preferred stock; or

issue common stock or preferred stock or additional stock or other securities or property to holders of our common stock or preferred stock by way of spinoff, split-up, reclassification, combination of shares or similar corporate rearrangement,

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then the holders of common stock warrants, preferred stock warrants and depositary share warrants, as applicable, will be entitled to receive upon exercise of the warrants, in addition to the securities otherwise receivable upon exercise of the warrants and without paying any additional consideration, the amount of stock and other securities and property such holders would have been entitled to receive had they held the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable, issuable under the warrants on the dates on which holders of those securities received or became entitled to receive such additional stock and other securities and property.

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Except as stated above, the exercise price and number of securities covered by a common stock warrant, preferred stock warrant and depositary share warrant, and the amounts of other securities or property to be received, if any, upon exercise of those warrants, will not be adjusted or provided for if we issue those securities or any securities convertible into or exchangeable for those securities, or securities carrying the right to purchase those securities or securities convertible into or exchangeable for those securities.

Holders of common stock warrants, preferred stock warrants and depositary share warrants may have additional rights under the following circumstances:

certain reclassifications, capital reorganizations or changes of the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable;

certain share exchanges, mergers, or similar transactions involving us and which result in changes of the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, as applicable; or

certain sales or dispositions to another entity of all or substantially all of our property and assets.

If one of the above transactions occurs and holders of our common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares are entitled to receive stock, securities or other property with respect to or in exchange for their securities, the holders of the common stock warrants, preferred stock warrants and depositary share warrants then outstanding, as applicable, will be entitled to receive upon exercise of their warrants the kind and amount of shares of stock and other securities or property that they would have received upon the applicable transaction if they had exercised their warrants immediately before the transaction.

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LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

We can issue securities in registered form or in the form of one or more global securities. We describe global securities in greater detail below. We refer to those persons who have securities registered in their own names on the books that we or any applicable trustee or depository or warrant agent maintain for this purpose as the holders of those securities. These persons are the legal holders of the securities. We refer to those persons who, indirectly through others, own beneficial interests in securities that are not registered in their own names, as indirect holders of those securities. As we discuss below, indirect holders are not legal holders, and investors in securities issued in book-entry form or in street name will be indirect holders.

Book-Entry Holders

We may issue securities in book-entry form only, as we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement. This means securities may be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depository on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system. These participating institutions, which are referred to as participants, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

Only the person in whose name a security is registered is recognized as the holder of that security. Global securities will be registered in the name of the depository. Consequently, for global securities, we will recognize only the depository as the holder of the securities, and we will make all payments on the securities to the depository. The depository passes along the payments it receives to its participants, which in turn pass the payments along to their customers who are the beneficial owners. The depository and its participants do so under agreements they have made with one another or with their customers; they are not obligated to do so under the terms of the securities.

As a result, investors in a global security will not own securities directly. Instead, they will own beneficial interests in a global security, through a bank, broker or other financial institution that participates in the depository's book-entry system or holds an interest through a participant. As long as the securities are issued in global form, investors will be indirect holders, and not holders, of the securities.

Street Name Holders

We may terminate a global security or issue securities that are not issued in global form. In these cases, investors may choose to hold their securities in their own names or in street name. Securities held by an investor in street name would be registered in the name of a bank, broker or other financial institution that the investor chooses, and the investor would hold only a beneficial interest in those securities through an account he or she maintains at that institution.

For securities held in street name, we or any applicable trustee or depository will recognize only the intermediary banks, brokers and other financial institutions in whose names the securities are registered as the holders of those securities, and we or any such trustee or depository will make all payments on those securities to them. These institutions pass along the payments they receive to their customers who are the beneficial owners, but only because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they are legally required to do so. Investors who hold securities in street name will be indirect holders, not holders, of those securities.

Legal Holders

Our obligations, as well as the obligations of any applicable trustee or third party employed by us or a trustee, run only to the legal holders of the securities. We do not have obligations to investors who hold beneficial interests in global securities, in street name or by any other indirect means. This will be the case whether an investor chooses to be an indirect holder of a security or has no choice because we are issuing the securities only in global form.

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For example, once we make a payment or give a notice to the holder, we have no further responsibility for the payment or notice even if that holder is required, under agreements with its participants or customers or by law, to pass it along to the indirect holders but does not do so. Similarly, we may want to obtain the approval of the holders to amend an indenture, to relieve us of the consequences of a default or of our obligation to comply with a particular provision of an indenture, or for other purposes. In such an event, we would seek approval only from the holders, and not the indirect holders, of the securities. Whether and how the holders contact the indirect holders is up to the holders.

Special Considerations For Indirect Holders

If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form because the securities are represented by one or more global securities or in street name, you should check with your own institution to find out:

how it handles securities payments and notices;

whether it imposes fees or charges;

how it would handle a request for the holders' consent, if ever required;

whether and how you can instruct it to send you securities registered in your own name so you can be a holder, if that is permitted in the future;

how it would exercise rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests; and

if the securities are global securities, how the depository's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

Global Securities

A global security is a security which represents one or any other number of individual securities held by a depository. Generally, all securities represented by the same global securities will have the same terms.

Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we issue to, deposit with and register in the name of a financial institution or its nominee that we select. The financial institution that we select for this purpose is called the depository. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, known as DTC, will be the depository for all global securities issued under this prospectus.

A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depository, its nominee or a successor depository, unless special termination situations arise. We describe those situations below under "Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated." As a result of these arrangements, the depository, or its nominee, will be the sole registered owner and holder of all securities

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represented by a global security, and investors will be permitted to own only beneficial interests in a global security. Beneficial interests must be held by means of an account with a broker, bank or other financial institution that in turn has an account with the depositary or with another institution that does. Thus, an investor whose security is represented by a global security will not be a holder of the security, but only an indirect holder of a beneficial interest in the global security.

If the prospectus supplement for a particular security indicates that the security will be issued as a global security, then the security will be represented by a global security at all times unless and until the global security is terminated. If termination occurs, we may issue the securities through another book-entry clearing system or decide that the securities may no longer be held through any book-entry clearing system.

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Special Considerations For Global Securities

As an indirect holder, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the investor's financial institution and of the depositary, as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize an indirect holder as a holder of securities and instead deal only with the depositary that holds the global security.

If securities are issued only as a global security, an investor should be aware of the following:

An investor cannot cause the securities to be registered in his or her name, and cannot obtain non-global certificates for his or her interest in the securities, except in the special situations we describe below;

An investor will be an indirect holder and must look to his or her own bank or broker for payments on the securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the securities, as we describe above;

An investor may not be able to sell interests in the securities to some insurance companies and to other institutions that are required by law to own their securities in non-book-entry form;

An investor may not be able to pledge his or her interest in the global security in circumstances where certificates representing the securities must be delivered to the lender or other beneficiary of the pledge in order for the pledge to be effective;

The depositary's policies, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in the global security. We and any applicable trustee have no responsibility for any aspect of the depositary's actions or for its records of ownership interests in the global security. We and the trustee also do not supervise the depositary in any way;

The depositary may, and we understand that DTC will, require that those who purchase and sell interests in the global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds, and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well; and

Financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system, and through which an investor holds its interest in the global security, may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the securities. There may be more than one financial intermediary in the chain of ownership for an investor. We do not monitor and are not responsible for the actions of any of those intermediaries.

Special Situations When A Global Security Will Be Terminated

In a few special situations described below, a global security will terminate and interests in it will be exchanged for physical certificates representing those interests. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold securities directly or in street name will be up to the investor. Investors must consult their own banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in securities transferred to their own name, so that they will be direct holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above.

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A global security will terminate when the following special situations occur:

if the depositary notifies us that it is unwilling, unable or no longer qualified to continue as depositary for that global security and we do not appoint another institution to act as depositary within 90 days;

if we notify any applicable trustee that we wish to terminate that global security; or

if an event of default has occurred with regard to securities represented by that global security and has not been cured or waived.

The prospectus supplement may also list additional situations for terminating a global security that would apply only to the particular series of securities covered by the prospectus supplement. When a global security terminates, the depositary, and not we or any applicable trustee, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions that will be the initial direct holders.

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PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities covered by this prospectus in any of three ways (or in any combination):

to or through underwriters or dealers;

directly to a limited number of purchasers or to a single purchaser; or

through agents.

We may also sell directly to investors through subscription rights distributed to our stockholders on a pro rata basis. In connection with any distribution of subscription rights to stockholders, if all of the underlying securities are not subscribed for, we may sell the unsubscribed shares of our common stock directly to third parties or may engage the services of one or more underwriters, dealers or agents, including standby underwriters, to sell the unsubscribed securities to third parties.

The prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering of the securities covered by this prospectus, including:

the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents and the amounts of securities underwritten or purchased by each of them;

any over-allotment options under which underwriters may purchase additional securities from us;

any underwriting discounts or commissions or agency fees and other items constituting underwriters' or agents' compensation;

the initial public offering price of the securities and the proceeds to us and any discounts, commissions or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and

any securities exchanges or markets on which the securities may be listed.

Any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time.

The distribution of our securities may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices, or at negotiated price, any of which may represent a discount from the prevailing market prices. If underwriters are used in the sale of any securities, the securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions described above. The securities may be either offered to the public through underwriting syndicates represented by managing underwriters, or directly by underwriters. Generally, the underwriters' obligations to purchase the securities will be subject to conditions precedent and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the securities if they purchase any of the securities. We may use underwriters with whom we have a material relationship. We will describe in the prospectus supplement, naming the underwriter, the nature of any such relationship.

We may sell the securities through agents from time to time. The prospectus supplement will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities and any commissions we pay to them. Generally, any agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain purchasers to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the prospectus supplement, and the prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts.

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Agents and underwriters may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments which the agents or underwriters may be required to make in respect thereof. Agents and underwriters may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

In connection with the sale of our securities, underwriters or agents may receive compensation from us or from purchasers of the securities, for whom they may act as agents, in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions. Underwriters may sell securities to or through dealers, and these dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters, dealers, and agents that participate in the distribution of securities may be deemed to be underwriters under the Securities Act, and any discounts or commissions they receive from us and any profit on the resale of securities they realize may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act.

Unless otherwise specified in the related prospectus supplement, all securities we offer, other than common stock, will be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters may make a market in these securities, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. Any common stock sold pursuant to a prospectus supplement will be included in the Nasdaq National Market. We may apply to list any series of debt securities, preferred stock, depositary shares or warrants on an exchange, but we are not obligated to do so. Therefore, no assurance can be given as to the liquidity of, or the trading market for, any series of securities.

We may engage in at-the-market offerings of our common stock. An at-the-market offering is an offering of our common stock at other than a fixed price to or through a market maker. Under Rule 415(a)(4) of the Securities Act, the total value of at the market offerings made under this prospectus may not exceed 10% of the aggregate market value of our common stock held by non-affiliates. Any underwriter that we engage for an at-the-market offering would be named in a post-effective amendment to the registration statement containing this prospectus.

Any underwriter may engage in overallotment transactions, stabilizing transactions, short-covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act. Overallotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Short covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution is completed to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

To comply with applicable state securities laws, the securities offered by this prospectus will be sold, if necessary, in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, securities may not be sold in some states unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

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LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of our common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by O Melveny & Myers LLP, San Francisco, California.

EXPERTS

The financial statements of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2002 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, independent accountants, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The consolidated financial statements of Biosearch Italia S.p.A. incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Current Report on Form 8-K of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. filed on June 6, 2003, have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers SpA, independent accountants, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the information and reporting requirements of the Exchange Act under which we file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy and information statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Our filings, including the registration statement, are available to the public over the internet at the Securities and Exchange Commission's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any documents we file at the Securities and Exchange Commission's Public Reference Rooms in Washington, D.C., New York, New York and Chicago, Illinois. The Public Reference Room in Washington, D.C. is located at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can request copies of these documents, upon payment of a duplicating fee, by submitting a request in writing to the Securities and Exchange Commission. Please call the Securities and Exchange Commission at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room. In addition, our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq National Market and the Nuovo Mercato stock exchange in Italy, and similar information concerning us can be inspected and copied at the offices of the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc., 9513 Key West Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850, or at the offices of Borsa Italiana S.p.A., 6 Piazza degli Affari, Milano 20123, Italy.

We have filed a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act with the Securities and Exchange Commission with respect to the securities being offered pursuant to this prospectus. This prospectus does not contain all the information set forth in the registration statement. Whenever a reference is made in this prospectus to any contract, agreement or other document of Vicuron, the reference may not be complete and you should refer to the exhibits that are a part of the registration statement or the exhibits to the reports or other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus for a copy of such contract, agreement or other document. Copies of all or any part of the registration, including the documents incorporated by reference or the exhibits, may be obtained upon payment of the prescribed rates at the offices of the Securities and Exchange Commission listed above.

You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information.

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INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The Securities and Exchange Commission allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information to you in this prospectus by referring you to the publicly filed documents containing this information. The information incorporated by reference is deemed to be a part of this prospectus, except for any information superseded by information contained in this prospectus or filed later by us with the Securities and Exchange Commission. We incorporate by reference into this prospectus the following documents that we have previously filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, which documents contain important information about Vicuron and our capital stock:

our annual report on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2002;

our proxy statement for our 2003 Annual Meeting of Shareholders as filed on Schedule 14A on April 30, 2003;

our quarterly reports on Forms 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2003, June 30, 2003 and September 30, 2003;

our current reports on Forms 8-K filed on March 26, 2003, June 6, 2003 and July 7, 2003;

the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 25, 2000 (File No. 0-31145), including any amendment or report updating this description;

the description of our preferred stock purchase rights contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 11, 2001 (File No. 0-31145), including any amendment or report updating this description.

All reports and other documents subsequently filed by us with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus and prior to the termination of the offering shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus and to be a part of this prospectus from the date of filing of such reports and documents. This prospectus also incorporates by reference any documents that we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission after the date of the initial registration statement and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement. Any statement contained in any document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or in any other subsequently filed document which also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus modifies or supersedes such statement. Any statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We will provide without charge to each person to whom this prospectus is delivered, upon written or oral request, a copy of any and all of the documents that have been incorporated by reference in this prospectus, other than the exhibits to such documents unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference but not delivered with this prospectus. Requests should be directed to Dov A. Goldstein, M.D., Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc., 455 South Gulph Road, Suite 305, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution**

The following table sets forth an estimate of the fees and expenses payable by the registrant in connection with the registration of the common stock offered hereby. All of such fees expenses, except for the Registration Fee, are estimated:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Registration Fee Securities and Exchange Commission | \$ 25,340 |
| Accounting fees and expenses | 40,000 |
| Legal fees and expenses | 200,000 |
| Printing fees and expenses | 15,000 |
| Miscellaneous | 30,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| Total | \$ 310,340 |
| | <hr/> |

All expenses in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being offered shall be borne by the registrant, other than underwriting discounts and selling commissions, if any.

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers

Pursuant to Sections 102(b)(7) and 145 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, the registrant's Fourth Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Amended and Restated Bylaws include provisions eliminating or limiting the personal liability of the members of the registrant's board of directors to the registrant and its stockholders for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duties as a director. This does not apply for any breach of a director's duty of loyalty to the registrant or its stockholders for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law, for paying an unlawful dividend or approving an illegal stock repurchase, or for any transaction from which a director derived an improper personal benefit.

The registrant's Amended and Restated Bylaws also provide that the registrant has the power to indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding (other than an action by or in the right of the registrant) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of any corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against any and all expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement and reasonably incurred in connection with such action, suit or proceeding. The registrant's power to indemnify applies only if the person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the person's conduct was unlawful. In the case of an action by or in the right of the registrant, no indemnification may be made with respect to any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable to the registrant unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought shall determine that despite the adjudication of liability such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for such expenses which the court shall deem proper. To the extent a director

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or officer of the registrant has been successful in the defense of any action, suit or proceeding referred to above or in the defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection therewith.

Pursuant to the authority provided by the registrant's Amended and Restated Bylaws, the registrant has entered into indemnity agreements with each of its directors and executive officers, indemnifying them against certain potential liabilities that may arise as a result of their service to the registrant, and providing for certain other protections. The registrant also maintains a directors' and officers' liability insurance policy which, subject to the limitations and exclusions stated therein, covers the executive officers and directors of the registrant for certain actions or inactions that they may take or omit to take in their capacities as executive officers and directors of the registrant.

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The foregoing summaries are necessarily subject to the complete text of the Delaware General Corporation Law, the registrant's Fourth Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Amended and Restated Bylaws, the indemnity agreements entered into between the registrant and each of its directors and officers and the registrant's directors' and officers' liability insurance policy and are qualified in their entirety by reference thereto.

Item 16. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules

(a) Exhibits

Exhibit

| Number | Description |
|---------------|--|
| 4.1 | Fourth Restated Certificate of Incorporation of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (1) |
| 4.2 | Amended and Restated Bylaws of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc., as currently in effect (2) |
| 4.3 | Certificate of Amendment and Restatement of the Certificate of Designations of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc.(3) |
| 4.4 | Certificate of Ownership and Merger of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (4) |
| 4.5 | Form of Common Stock Certificate (1) |
| 4.6 | Shareholder Rights Agreement by and between Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, as Rights Agent, dated June 28, 2001 (3) |
| 4.7 | First Amendment to Shareholder Rights Agreement, dated as of July 30, 2002, by and between Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, as Rights Agent (5) |
| 4.8 | Form of Deposit Agreement and Depositary Receipt |
| 4.9 | Form of Senior Debt Indenture |
| 4.10 | Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture |
| 4.11 | Form of Senior Note (6) |
| 4.12 | Form of Subordinated Note (6) |
| 4.13 | Form of Common Stock Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.14 | Form of Preferred Stock Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.15 | Form of Depositary Share Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.16 | Form of Debt Securities Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 5.1 | Opinion of O Melveny & Myers LLP |
| 23.1 | Consent of O Melveny & Myers LLP (included as part of Exhibit 5.1 hereto) |
| 23.2 | Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP |
| 23.3 | Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers SpA |
| 24.1 | Power of Attorney (included on signature page of the Registration Statement hereto) |

- (1) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's registration statement on Form S-1 (No. 333-33022), effective August 2, 2000, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (2) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's annual report on Form 10-K, filed March 3, 2003, and incorporated herein by reference.

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- (3) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed July 11, 2001, and incorporated herein by reference.

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- (4) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed March 26, 2003, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (5) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed July 30, 2002, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (6) To be filed by registrant as an exhibit to a current report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference.

(b) Financial Statement Schedules:

None.

Item 17. Undertakings

(a) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

1. To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement; and

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided, however, that paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(1)(ii) do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in periodic reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement.

2. That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

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3. To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(b) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(c) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification

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is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

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/s/ CLAUDIO QUARTA, Ph.D.

Claudio Quarta, Ph.D.

Director

February 13, 2004

/s/ UBALDO LIVOLSI, Ph.D.

Ubaldo Livolsi, Ph.D.

Chief Scientific Officer and Director

February 13, 2004

/s/ FRANCESCO PARENTI, Ph.D.

Francesco Parenti, Ph.D.

Chief of Manufacturing and Director

February , 2004

Costantino Ambrosio

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| <u>Signature</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|---|--|-------------------|
| <hr/> /s/ CHRISTOPHER T. WALSH, PH.D. <hr/> Christopher T. Walsh, Ph.D. | Director | February 13, 2004 |
| <hr/> /s/ DAVID V. MILLIGAN, PH.D. <hr/> David V. Milligan, Ph.D. | Director | February 13, 2004 |
| <hr/> /s/ DOV A. GOLDSTEIN, M.D. <hr/> Dov A. Goldstein, M.D. | Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial Officer) | February 13, 2004 |

Table of Contents**EXHIBIT INDEX****Exhibit**

| Number | Description |
|---------------|--|
| 4.1 | Fourth Restated Certificate of Incorporation of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (1) |
| 4.2 | Amended and Restated Bylaws of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc., as currently in effect (2) |
| 4.3 | Certificate of Amendment and Restatement of the Certificate of Designations of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc.(3) |
| 4.4 | Certificate of Ownership and Merger of Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. (4) |
| 4.5 | Form of Common Stock Certificate (1) |
| 4.6 | Shareholder Rights Agreement by and between Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, as Rights Agent, dated June 28, 2001 (3) |
| 4.7 | First Amendment to Shareholder Rights Agreement, dated as of July 30, 2002, by and between Vicuron Pharmaceuticals Inc. and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, as Rights Agent (5) |
| 4.8 | Form of Deposit Agreement and Depositary Receipt |
| 4.9 | Form of Senior Debt Indenture |
| 4.10 | Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture |
| 4.11 | Form of Senior Note (6) |
| 4.12 | Form of Subordinated Note (6) |
| 4.13 | Form of Common Stock Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.14 | Form of Preferred Stock Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.15 | Form of Depositary Share Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 4.16 | Form of Debt Securities Warrant Agreement and Warrant Certificate |
| 5.1 | Opinion of O Melveny & Myers LLP |
| 23.1 | Consent of O Melveny & Myers LLP (included as part of Exhibit 5.1 hereto) |
| 23.2 | Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP |
| 23.3 | Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers SpA |
| 24.1 | Power of Attorney (included on signature page of the Registration Statement hereto) |

- (1) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's registration statement on Form S-1 (No. 333-33022), effective August 2, 2000, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (2) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's annual report on Form 10-K, filed March 3, 2003, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (3) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed July 11, 2001, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (4) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed March 26, 2003, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (5) Previously filed as an exhibit to the registrant's current report on Form 8-K, filed July 30, 2002, and incorporated herein by reference.
- (6) To be filed by registrant as an exhibit to a current report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference.