

SOLA INTERNATIONAL INC
Form S-3/A
October 16, 2003
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As Filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 16, 2003

Registration No. 333-109383

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20549

Amendment No. 1

to

FORM S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

SOLA International Inc.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Delaware
(State or Other Jurisdiction)

of Incorporation or Organization)

94-3189941
(IRS Employer)

Identification Number)

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10590 West Ocean Air Drive, Suite 300

San Diego, California 92130

(858) 509-9899

(Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)

Jeremy C. Bishop

President and Chief Executive Officer

SOLA International Inc.

10590 West Ocean Air Drive, Suite 300

San Diego, California 92130

(858) 509-9899

(Name, Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Agent For Service)

Copies to:

George C. McKann

Gardner Carton & Douglas LLP

191 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 3700

Chicago, Illinois 60606-1698

(312) 569-1127

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective.

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

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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.

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If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) 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. "

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. "

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

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 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 it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, dated October 16, 2003

PROSPECTUS

\$400,000,000

SOLA International Inc.

**Debt Securities, Common Stock, Preferred Stock,
Depositary Shares, Securities Warrants,
Stock Purchase Contracts, Stock Purchase Units**

We may offer and sell, from time to time, in one or more offerings, any combination of:

unsecured senior debt securities;

unsecured subordinated debt securities;

shares of our common stock;

shares of our preferred stock;

shares of our preferred stock represented by depositary shares;

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warrants to purchase debt securities;

warrants to purchase our common stock;

warrants to purchase our preferred stock;

stock purchase contracts; and

stock purchase units.

These securities, which we describe in this prospectus, will have a total initial offering price not exceeding \$400,000,000.

We will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement. We urge you to read carefully this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, which will describe the specific terms of the securities offered, before you make your investment decision.

Our common stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol SOL. On October 15, 2003, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE was \$17.29. We have not yet determined whether any of the other securities offered hereby will be listed on any exchange or over-the-counter market. If we decide to seek listing of such securities, a prospectus supplement relating thereto will identify such exchange or market.

We may sell these securities to or through underwriters and also to other purchasers or through agents. We will set forth the names of any underwriters or agents in a prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is _____, 2003.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, which we refer to as the SEC, using the SEC's shelf registration rules. Under the shelf registration rules, using this prospectus, together with a prospectus supplement, we may sell from time to time, in one or more offerings, any of the securities described in this prospectus having a total initial offering price not exceeding \$400,000,000.

In this prospectus, SOLA, the company, we, us, and our refer to SOLA International Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless the context otherwise requires.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may sell. Each time we sell securities under this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Market information in the incorporated documents is generally based on company estimates and not third party sources. You should read this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and the additional information described below under "Where You Can Find More Information" before making an investment decision.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any reports, statements or other information we file with the SEC at its public reference room at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. Our filings also are available to the public on the Internet, through a database maintained by the SEC at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you can inspect and copy our reports, statements and other information at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

We filed a registration statement on Form S-3 to register with the SEC the securities described in this prospectus. This prospectus is part of that registration statement. As permitted by SEC rules, this prospectus does not contain all the information contained in the registration statement or the exhibits to the registration statement. You may refer to the registration statement and accompanying exhibits for more information about us and our securities.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this document the information we filed with it. This means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information to you by referring you to other documents separately filed with the SEC. All information incorporated by reference is part of this document, unless and until that information is updated and superseded by the information contained in this document or any information subsequently incorporated by reference.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below:

1. Our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003.

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2. Our quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2003.

3. Our definitive proxy statement on Schedule 14A filed on June 27, 2003.

You may request free copies of these filings by writing or telephoning Investor Relations, SOLA International Inc., 10590 West Ocean Air Drive, Suite 300, San Diego, California 92130, telephone (858) 509-9899, fax (858) 509-9898. We will not send exhibits to the filings, however, unless those exhibits have been specifically incorporated by reference.

We also incorporate by reference all future filings we make with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 on or (i) after the date of the filing of the registration statement

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containing this prospectus and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement and (ii) after the date of this prospectus and prior to the closing of the offering made hereby. Those documents will become a part of this prospectus from the date that the documents are filed with the SEC.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell, or soliciting an offer to buy, securities in any jurisdiction where the offer and sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date of the documents containing the information, regardless of the time of its delivery or of any sale of our securities. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION

Certain of the matters discussed in this report or in the information incorporated by reference may constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements can generally be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as believes, expects, may, will, should, seeks, approximately, intends, plans, estimates, or negative of these terms or other comparable terminology, or by discussions of strategy, plans or intentions. Statements contained in this report that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Without limiting the generality of the preceding statement, all statements in this report concerning or relating to estimated and projected earnings, margins, costs, expenditures, cash flows, growth rates and financial results are forward-looking statements. In addition, we, through our senior management, from time to time make forward-looking public statements concerning our expected future operations and performance and other developments. These forward-looking statements are necessarily estimates reflecting our best judgment based upon current information and involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Other factors may affect the accuracy of these forward-looking statements and our actual results may differ materially from the results anticipated in these forward-looking statements. While it is impossible to identify all relevant factors, factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those estimated by us include, but are not limited to, those factors or conditions described in our SEC filings and under **Risk Factors** in the applicable prospectus supplement, as well as changes in the regulation of the spectacle lens industry at the federal, state or foreign level, competitive pressures in the spectacle lens industry and our response to these factors, and general conditions in the economy and capital markets. We have no duty to update any of the forward-looking statements after the date of this prospectus to conform them to actual results.

All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to SOLA and persons acting on our behalf are qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements included in our SEC filings and under **Risk Factors** in the applicable prospectus supplement.

THE COMPANY

We commenced operations in 1960 and were incorporated in Delaware in 1993. We are a leading designer, manufacturer and global distributor of a broad range of plastic and glass eyeglass lenses and hold a strong manufacturing and technology position in the growing plastic lens segment of the global spectacle lens market. We have sales offices in 28 countries worldwide and operate in most major regions of the world. We believe that we hold a top three market position in terms of volume of plastic eyeglass lenses sold in each major region where we operate North America, Europe and Rest of World (consisting primarily of Australia, Asia and South America). We focus our efforts on products with advanced design characteristics, lens coatings and treatments, and thin and light weight materials.

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We market our spectacle lens products globally under the brands SOLA and American Optical (AO) and distribute them globally through four primary channels: (1) direct to national retail chains, (2) direct to retail outlets, (3) wholesale distributors (*e.g.*, independent processing laboratories), and (4) managed care organizations in the United States.

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Our business is organized into three primary markets: North America, Europe and Rest of World. For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003, we generated approximately 44% of our net sales from North America, 37% from Europe and 19% from Rest of World.

Our principal executive offices are located at 10590 West Ocean Air Drive, Suite 300, San Diego, California 92130, and our telephone number is (858) 509-9899. Our website address is www.sola.com.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. The prospectus supplement applicable to each type or series of securities we offer will contain a discussion of risks applicable to an investment in us and to the particular types of securities that we are offering under that prospectus supplement. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the heading Risk Factors in the applicable prospectus supplement together with all of the other information contained in the prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth the ratio of earnings to fixed charges of SOLA for the years ended March 31, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 and for the three months ended June 30, 2003.

| | Fiscal Year Ended March 31, | | | | | Three Months Ended |
|---|-----------------------------|------|--------|------|------|--------------------|
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | June 30, 2003 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges (1) | 1.95 | 1.05 | | 1.75 | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| Ratio of deficiency in earnings to fixed charges (1)(2) | | | (2.47) | | | |

- (1) For purposes of this calculation, earnings/(deficiency) in earnings are defined as income/(loss) before provision for income taxes and minority interest plus fixed charges. Fixed charges include interest expense on all indebtedness (including amortization of deferred financing costs) and the portion of operating lease rental expenses that management believes is representative of the interest factor of rent expense (approximately one-third of rent expense).
- (2) The pre-tax loss for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001 was not sufficient to cover fixed charges by a total of approximately \$69.961 million.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless indicated otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds from the sale by us of our securities for general corporate purposes, including, but not limited to, repayment or refinancing of borrowings, working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions and the repurchase of our common stock. Additional information on the use of proceeds from the sale of securities offered by this prospectus may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to such offering.

SECURITIES WE MAY ISSUE

Overview

This prospectus describes the securities we may issue from time to time. The remainder of this section provides some background information about the manner in which the securities may be held and then describes the terms of the following basic categories of securities:

unsecured senior debt securities;

unsecured subordinated debt securities;

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shares of our common stock;

shares of our preferred stock;

shares of our preferred stock represented by depositary shares;

warrants to purchase debt securities;

warrants to purchase our common stock;

warrants to purchase our preferred stock;

stock purchase contracts; and

stock purchase units.

Prospectus Supplements

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities pursuant to this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add to or change information contained in this prospectus. If so, the prospectus supplement should be read as superseding this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

The applicable prospectus supplement to be attached to the front of this prospectus will describe the terms of any securities that we offer and any initial offering price to the public in that offering, the purchase price and net proceeds that we will receive and the other specific terms related to our offering of the securities. For more details on the terms of the securities, you should read the exhibits filed with our registration statement, of which this prospectus is a part.

Holders of Securities

Book-Entry Holders. We will issue debt securities in book-entry form only, unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may issue shares of our common stock, preferred stock and depositary shares offered hereby in book-entry form. If securities are issued in book-entry form, this means the securities will be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depositary on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system. These participating institutions, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

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We will only recognize the person in whose name a security is registered as the holder of that security. Consequently, for securities issued in global form, we will recognize only the depositary as the holder of the securities and all payments on the securities will be made to the depositary. The depositary 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 depositary 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 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 depositary'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 of the securities.

Street Name Holders. In the future, we may terminate a global security or issue securities initially in non-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.

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For securities held in street name, we 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 all payments on those securities will be made 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 of those securities.

Legal Holders. We, and any third parties employed by us or acting on your behalf, such as trustees, depositories and transfer agents, are obligated 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.

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

When we refer to you, we mean those who invest in the securities being offered by this prospectus, whether they are the legal holders or only indirect holders of those securities. When we refer to your securities, we mean the securities in which you hold a direct or indirect interest.

Special Considerations for Indirect Holders. If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form 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 legal 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 in book-entry form, how the depository's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

Global Securities

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What is a Global Security? A global security represents one or any other number of individual securities. Generally, all securities represented by the same global securities will have the same terms. We may, however, issue a global security that represents multiple securities that have different terms and are issued at different times. We call this kind of global security a master global security.

Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we deposit with and register in the name of a financial institution that we select or its nominee. The financial institution that is selected 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 securities issued in book-entry form. Beneficial interests in global securities will be shown on, and transfers of global securities will be reflected through, records maintained by DTC and its participants.

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A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depository or its nominee, unless special termination situations arise or as otherwise described in the prospectus supplement. 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 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 depository 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.

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 depository, as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize this type of investor as a holder of securities and instead will deal only with the depository that holds the global security.

If securities are issued only in the form of 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 physical 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 under **Holders of Securities** 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 a 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 depository's policies, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in a global security. Neither we nor any third parties employed by us or acting on your behalf, such as trustees and transfer agents, have any responsibility for any aspect of the depository's actions or for its records of ownership interests in a global security. We and the trustee do not supervise the depository in any way.

DTC requires that those who purchase and sell interests in a global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well.

Financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system, and through which an investor holds its interest in a global security, may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the security. 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 be terminated and interests in it will be exchanged for certificates in non-global form representing the securities it represented. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold the 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 a global security transferred on termination to their own names, so that they will be holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above under **Holders of Securities** .

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The special situations for termination of a global security are as follows:

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 a specified time period; or

if we elect to terminate that global security.

The applicable prospectus supplement may also list additional situations for terminating a global security that would apply to a particular series of securities covered by the applicable prospectus supplement. If a global security is terminated, only the depositary is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions in whose names the securities represented by the global security will be registered and, therefore, who will be the holders of those securities.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

This section summarizes general terms and provisions of debt securities to which any prospectus supplement may relate. The particular terms of any series of debt securities that we offer will be described in the prospectus supplement to be attached to the front of this prospectus. To the extent that any particular terms of the debt securities described in a prospectus supplement differ from the terms described herein, then the terms described herein shall be deemed to have been superceded by the prospectus supplement.

As required by U.S. federal law for all bonds and notes of companies that are publicly offered, the debt securities will be governed by a document called an indenture. An indenture is a contract between us and a financial institution, in this case, State Street Bank and Trust Company of California, N.A., acting as trustee on your behalf. The indenture will be subject to and governed by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. The trustee has two main roles:

first, subject to some limitations, the trustee can enforce your rights against us if we default; and

second, the trustee performs certain administrative duties for us, which include sending you interest payments and notices.

Because this section is a summary of the material terms of the indenture, it does not describe every aspect of the debt securities. We urge you to read the indenture because it, and not this description, defines your rights as a holder of debt securities. We have filed the indenture as an exhibit to a registration statement that we have filed with the SEC, of which this prospectus is a part. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#), for information on how to obtain a copy of the indenture. The indenture is subject to any amendments or supplements that we may enter into from time to time that are permitted under the indenture.

General

We may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more distinct series. The debt securities will be unsecured obligations of our company. Unless otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be unsubordinated obligations of the company and will

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rank *pari passu* with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. We may also issue debt securities that are subordinated in right of payment to all our existing and future senior indebtedness, in the manner and to the extent described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Our debt securities are effectively subordinated to all existing and future indebtedness and other liabilities (including trade payables and capital lease obligations) of any of our subsidiaries. This may affect your ability to receive payments on our debt securities.

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You should read the prospectus supplement for the following terms of the series of debt securities offered by the prospectus supplement:

The title of the debt securities or series of which they are a part and whether the debt securities will be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;

The aggregate principal amount of the debt securities and any limit on the aggregate principal amount;

The date or dates when the principal of the debt securities will be payable or how those dates will be determined;

The interest rate or rates, which may be fixed or variable, that the debt securities will bear, if any, and how the rate or rates will be determined;

The date or dates from which any interest will accrue or how the date or dates will be determined, the date or dates on which any interest will be payable, any regular record dates for these payments or how these dates will be determined and the basis on which any interest will be calculated, if other than on the basis of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months;

The place or places of payment of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities;

Any optional redemption provisions;

Any sinking fund or other provisions that would obligate us to repurchase or redeem the debt securities;

Whether the amount of payments of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities will be determined with reference to an index, formula or other method and how these amounts will be determined;

Any changes, additions or deletions to the events of default under the indenture or covenants with respect to the debt securities;

If not the principal amount of the debt securities, the portion of the principal amount that will be payable upon acceleration of the maturity of the debt securities or, if applicable, the portion of the principal amount of the debt securities that is convertible into or exchangeable for other securities, or how that portion will be determined;

Any changes or additions to the provisions concerning defeasance and covenant defeasance contained in the indenture that will apply to the debt securities;

Any provisions granting special rights to the holders of the debt securities upon the occurrence of specified events;

If other than the trustee, the name of any paying agent, security registrar and transfer agent for the debt securities;

If the debt securities are not to be issued in book-entry form only and held by a depository, whether such debt securities are to be issuable as registered securities, bearer securities or both; whether such bearer securities are to be issuable with coupons, without coupons or both; the date as of which such bearer securities shall be dated, if other than the date of original issuance of the first of such

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bearer securities to be issued; any restrictions on the offer, sale or delivery of bearer securities; and the terms, if any, upon which bearer securities of the series may be exchanged for registered securities of the series and vice versa, if permitted by applicable law and regulations;

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The subordination, if any, of the debt securities of the series pursuant to the indenture, and any corresponding changes to the provisions in the indenture as then in effect;

If other than U.S. dollars, the currency or currencies of such debt securities;

If the principal of or any premium or interest on such debt securities is to be payable, at the election of the company or a holder, in one or more currencies, currency units or composite currencies other than those in which the debt securities are stated to be payable, the applicable currencies, currency units or composite currencies and the periods within which and the terms and conditions upon which such election is to be made;

The person to whom any interest on a debt security will be payable, if other than the registered holder at the close of business on the regular record date;

The denomination or denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$1,000 or any integral multiples thereof;

Whether the debt securities will be convertible into or exchangeable for any other securities or property and, if so, the terms and conditions upon which the debt securities will be so convertible or exchangeable;

A discussion of federal income tax, accounting and other special considerations, procedures and limitations with respect to the debt securities;

Whether payment of any amounts due under the indenture will be guaranteed by one or more of our subsidiaries; and

Any other terms of the debt securities whether or not consistent with the provisions of the indenture.

For purposes of this prospectus, any reference to the payment of principal of or any premium or interest on debt securities will include additional amounts if required by the terms of such debt securities.

The indenture does not limit the amount of debt securities that we are authorized to issue from time to time. The indenture also provides that there may be more than one trustee thereunder, each for one or more series of debt securities. At a time when two or more trustees are acting under the indenture, each with respect to only certain series, the term "debt securities" means the series of debt securities for which each respective trustee is acting. If there is more than one trustee under the indenture, the powers and trust obligations of each trustee will apply only to the debt securities for which it is trustee. If two or more trustees are acting under the indenture, then the debt securities for which each trustee is acting would be treated as if issued under separate indentures.

We may issue debt securities with terms different from those of debt securities that may already have been issued. Without the consent of the holders thereof, we may reopen a previous issue of a series of debt securities and issue additional debt securities of that series without limit unless the reopening was restricted when that series was created.

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There is no requirement that we issue debt securities in the future under any indenture, and we may use other indentures or documentation, containing materially different provisions in connection with future issues of other debt securities.

We may issue the debt securities as original issue discount securities, which are debt securities, including any zero-coupon debt securities, that are issued and sold at a discount from their stated principal amount. Original issue discount securities provide that, upon acceleration of their maturity, an amount less than their principal amount will become due and payable. We will describe the U.S. federal income tax consequences and other considerations applicable to original issue discount securities in any prospectus supplement relating to them.

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In addition, special U.S. federal income tax considerations or other restrictions or other terms applicable to any debt securities offered exclusively to foreigners or denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars may also be set forth in the prospectus supplement, if applicable.

Conversion and Exchange

If any debt securities are convertible into or exchangeable for other securities, the prospectus supplement will explain the terms and conditions of such conversion or exchange, including:

the conversion price or exchange ratio, or the calculation method for such price or ratio;

the conversion or exchange period, or how such period will be determined;

if conversion or exchange will be mandatory or at the option of the holder or our company;

provisions for adjustment of the conversion price or the exchange ratio;

provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of the redemption of the debt securities; and

any other terms of the debt securities that are consistent with the provisions of the indenture.

Such terms may also include provisions under which the number or amount of other securities to be received by the holders of such debt securities upon conversion or exchange would be calculated according to the market price of such other securities as of a time stated in the prospectus supplement.

Additional Mechanics

Form, Exchange and Transfer

The debt securities will be issued:

as registered securities;

as bearer securities with interest coupons attached, unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement; however, the debt securities will not be bearer securities unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement; or

in global form, see Securities We May Issue Global Securities.

You may have your registered securities divided into registered securities of smaller denominations or combined into registered securities of larger denominations, as long as the total principal amount is not changed. This is called an exchange.

You may exchange or transfer registered securities of a series at the office of the trustee. The trustee maintains the list of registered holders and acts as our agent for registering debt securities in the names of holders and transferring debt securities. However, we may appoint another trustee to act as our agent or we may act as our own agent. If provided in the prospectus supplement, you may exchange your bearer securities for registered securities of the same series so long as the total principal amount is not changed. Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, bearer securities will not be issued in exchange for registered securities.

You will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange debt securities, but you may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the exchange or transfer. The transfer or exchange will only be made if the transfer agent is satisfied with your proof of ownership.

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If we designate additional transfer agents, they will be named in the prospectus supplement. We may cancel the designation of any particular transfer agent. We may also approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts.

If the debt securities are redeemable and we redeem less than all of the debt securities of a particular series, we may refuse any transfer or exchange of debt securities for 15 days before the day we mail the notice of redemption or publish such notice (in the case of bearer securities) and ending on the day of that mailing or publication in order to freeze the list of holders to prepare the mailing. We may also refuse to register transfers or exchanges of debt securities selected for redemption, except that we will continue to permit transfers and exchanges of the unredeemed portion of any debt security being partially redeemed.

Paying and Paying Agents

If you are a holder of registered securities, we will pay interest to you if you are a direct holder in the list of registered holders at the close of business on a particular day in advance of each due date for interest, even if you no longer own the security on the interest due date. That particular time and day is called the Regular Record Date and is stated in the prospectus supplement. Holders buying and selling debt securities must work out between them how to compensate for the fact that we will pay all the interest for an interest period to the one who is the registered holder on the Regular Record Date. The most common manner is to adjust the sales price of the debt securities to prorate interest fairly between buyer and seller. This prorated interest amount is called accrued interest.

With respect to registered securities, we will pay interest, principal and any other money due on the debt securities at the corporate trust office of the trustee. You must make arrangements to have your payments picked up at or wired from that office. We may also choose to pay interest by mailing checks or making wire transfers.

Street name and other indirect holders should consult their banks or brokers for information on how they will receive payments.

If bearer securities are issued, unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, we will maintain an office or agency outside the United States for the payment of all amounts due on the bearer securities. If debt securities are listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange or any other stock exchange located outside the United States, we will maintain an office or agency for such debt securities in any city located outside the United States required by such stock exchange. The initial locations of such offices and agencies will be specified in the prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, payment of interest on any bearer securities on or before maturity will be made only against surrender of coupons for such interest installments as they mature. Unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, no payment with respect to any bearer security will be made at any office or agency of our company in the United States or by check mailed to any address in the United States or by transfer to an account maintained with a bank located in the United States. Notwithstanding the foregoing, payments of principal, premium and interest, if any, on bearer securities payable in U.S. dollars will be made at the office of our paying agent if (but only if) payment of the full amount in U.S. dollars at all offices or agencies outside the United States is illegal or effectively precluded by exchange controls or other similar restrictions.

Regardless of who acts as the paying agent, all money paid by us to a paying agent that remains unclaimed at the end of two years after the amount is due to registered holders will be repaid to us. After that two-year period, you may look only to us for payment and not to the trustee, any other paying agent or anyone else.

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We may also arrange for additional payment offices, and may cancel or change these offices, including our use of the trustee's corporate trust office. We may also choose to act as our own paying agent. We must notify you of changes in identities of the paying agents for any particular series of debt securities.

Notices

With respect to registered securities, we and the trustee will send notices regarding the debt securities only to registered holders, using their addresses as listed in the list of registered holders. With respect to bearer

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securities, we and the trustee will give notice by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in The City of New York or in such other cities that may be specified in a prospectus supplement.

Events of Default

You will have special rights if an event of default occurs in respect of the debt securities of your series and is not cured, as described later in this subsection.

What is an Event Of Default? Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, the term event of default in respect of the debt securities of your series means any of the following:

We do not pay the principal of or any premium on a debt security of such series on its due date whether at maturity, upon redemption or upon acceleration.

We do not pay interest on a debt security of such series within 30 days of its due date.

We do not deposit any sinking fund payment in respect of debt securities of such series on its due date.

We remain in breach of a covenant in respect of debt securities of such series for 60 days after we receive a written notice of default stating we are in breach and requiring that we remedy the breach. The notice must be sent by either the trustee or holders of 25% of the principal amount of debt securities of such series.

We file for bankruptcy or certain other events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occur.

A default under any instrument under which there may be issued or by which there may be secured or evidenced any indebtedness for money borrowed by the company (or by a significant subsidiary of the company, the repayment of which the company has guaranteed or for which the company is directly responsible or liable as obligor or guarantor), having an aggregate principal amount outstanding of at least \$20,000,000, which default shall have resulted in such indebtedness being declared due and payable prior to the date on which it would otherwise have become due and payable, without such indebtedness being discharged or such acceleration having been rescinded or annulled within 30 days after written notice as provided in the indenture.

Any other event of default in respect of debt securities of such series described in the prospectus supplement occurs.

The events of default described above may be modified as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. An event of default for a particular series of debt securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default for any other series of debt securities issued under an indenture. Each series will have separate rights upon an event of default. The trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any default (except in the payment of principal or interest) if it considers such withholding of notice to be in the best interests of the holders.

Remedies if an Event of Default Occurs. If an event of default has occurred and has not been cured, the trustee or the holders of 25% in principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series may declare the entire principal amount of (or, if any of the debt securities of that series are original discount issue or indexed debt securities, such portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) all the debt securities of that series to be due and immediately payable. This is called a declaration of acceleration of maturity. At any time after a declaration of acceleration has been made, but before a judgment or decree based on acceleration has been obtained, the holders of

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a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series may, under certain circumstances, rescind and annul such acceleration by written notice.

Except in cases of default, where the trustee has some special duties, the trustee is not required to take any action under the indenture at the request of the holders unless the holders offer the trustee reasonable protection from expenses and liability, called an indemnity. If reasonable indemnity is provided, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the relevant series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any lawsuit or other formal legal action seeking any remedy available to the trustee. The trustee may refuse to follow those directions in certain circumstances. No delay or omission in exercising any right or remedy will be treated as a waiver of such right, remedy or event of default. You are entitled at any time to bring a lawsuit for the payment of money due on your debt securities on or after the due date.

Holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series may waive any past defaults other than (1) the payment of principal, any premium or interest or (2) in respect of a covenant or other provision that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of each holder.

Street name and other indirect holders should consult their banks or brokers for information on how to give notice or direction or to make a request of the trustee and to make or cancel a declaration of acceleration.

Each year, we will furnish to the trustee a written statement of our principal executive officer, principal financial officer or principal accounting officer certifying that, to the best of his or her knowledge, we are in compliance with the indenture and the debt securities, or else specifying any default.

No Protection in the Event of Change of Control

The indenture does not have any covenants or other provisions providing for a put or increased interest or otherwise that would afford holders of debt securities additional protection in the event of a sudden and significant decline in our credit quality, a recapitalization transaction, a change of control of SOLA or a highly leveraged transaction. Accordingly, we could in the future enter into transactions that could increase the amount of indebtedness outstanding at the time or otherwise affect our capital structure or credit rating. If we offer any covenants of this type or provisions with respect to any debt securities in the future, we will describe them in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Covenants

Unless otherwise indicated in this prospectus or a prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not have the benefit of any covenants that limit or restrict our business or operations, the pledging of our assets or the incurrence by us of indebtedness. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement any material covenants of a series of debt securities.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Under the terms of the indenture, we are generally permitted to consolidate or merge with another entity. We are also permitted to sell, lease, assign, transfer or otherwise convey all or substantially all of our assets to another entity. However, we may not take any of these actions unless all the following conditions are met:

either we will be the surviving corporation or, if we merge out of existence or sell all or substantially all of our assets, the entity into which we merge or to which we sell all or substantially all of our assets must agree to be legally responsible for the debt securities and be an entity organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any state thereof;

immediately after the merger or transfer of assets, no default on the debt securities can exist. A default for this purpose includes any event that would be an event of

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default if the requirements for giving a default notice or of having the default exist for a specific period of time were disregarded;

we must deliver certain certificates and documents to the trustee; and

we must satisfy any other requirements specified in the prospectus supplement.

Modification or Waiver

There are three types of changes we can make to the indenture and the debt securities.

Changes Requiring Your Approval. First, there are changes that cannot be made to your debt securities without your specific approval. Except as otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, the following is a list of those types of changes:

changing the stated maturity of the principal of, or premium, if any, or any installment of principal of or interest on any debt security or the date, if any, on which any debt security is subject to repayment at the option of the holder;

reducing the principal amount of, or any premium or interest on, or the rate of interest on any debt security;

reducing any amounts due on a debt security or payable upon acceleration of the maturity of a security following a default;

changing the place (except as otherwise described in this prospectus) or currency of payment on a debt security;

impairing your right to sue for payment on or after the stated maturity;

modifying any provision regarding supplemental indentures, waiver of past defaults or waiver of certain covenants, except to increase any such percentage or to provide that certain other provisions of the indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby;

in the case of subordinated debt securities, modifying the subordination provisions in a manner that is adverse as a whole in any material respect to holders of the subordinated debt securities;

reducing the percentage of holders of debt securities whose consent is needed to modify or amend the indenture;

reducing the percentage of holders of debt securities whose consent is needed to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or to waive certain defaults; and

other provisions specified in the prospectus supplement.

Changes Requiring a Majority Vote. The second type of change to the indenture and the outstanding debt securities is the kind that requires a vote in favor by holders of outstanding debt securities owning a majority of the principal amount of the particular series affected. Separate votes will be needed for each series even if they are affected in the same way. Most changes fall into this category, except as described under **Changes Requiring Your Approval** above and for clarifying changes and certain other changes that would not adversely affect holders of the outstanding debt securities in any material respect as described under **Changes Not Requiring Approval**. The same vote would be required for us to obtain a waiver of all or part of certain covenants in the indenture, or a waiver of a past default. However, we cannot obtain a waiver of a payment default or any other aspect of the indenture or the outstanding debt securities listed in the first category described previously under **Changes Requiring Your Approval** unless we obtain your individual consent to the waiver.

Changes Not Requiring Approval. The third type of change does not require any vote by holders of outstanding debt securities. From time to time, we and the trustee may, without the consent of holders of the debt

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securities of one or more series, amend the indenture or the debt securities of one or more series, or supplement the indenture, for certain specified purposes, including:

to provide that a successor to the company permitted under the indenture shall assume all of our obligations under the indenture and debt securities;

to add guarantees with respect to the debt securities;

to secure the debt securities;

to add to the covenants of the company for the benefit of the holders of the debt securities, to surrender any right or power conferred upon the company in the indenture or to add any event of default;

to comply with any requirements of the SEC under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939;

to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency, or make any other change or changes that do not adversely affect the interests of the holders of debt securities of any series in any material respect;

to establish the form and terms of debt securities of any series;

to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in bearer form, registrable or not registrable as to principal, and with or without coupons; to change or eliminate any restrictions on the payment of principal of, or any premium or interest on, bearer securities; to permit bearer securities to be issued in exchange for registrable securities; to permit bearer securities to be exchanged for bearer securities of other authorized denominations; or to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in uncertificated form, in each case so long as such action does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities of any series in any material respect;

to add to, change or eliminate any provision of one or more series of debt securities, so long as such addition, change or elimination (1) does not apply to any debt security of a series created prior to the execution of the supplemental indenture and entitled to the benefit of that provision or modify the right of any holder as to such provision or (2) becomes effective only when there is no such debt security outstanding;

to permit or facilitate the defeasance, covenant defeasance or satisfaction and discharge of any series of debt securities under the indenture, so long as such action does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities of any series in any material respect; and

to appoint a successor trustee under the indenture with respect to one or more series or to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts under the indenture by more than one trustee.

Satisfaction and Discharge

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Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, the indenture will cease to be of further effect, and we will be deemed to have satisfied and discharged the indenture with respect to a particular series of debt securities, when all debt securities of that series previously authenticated and delivered have been delivered to the trustee for cancellation or when the following conditions have been satisfied:

all debt securities of that series not previously delivered to the trustee for cancellation have become due and payable or will become due and payable at their stated maturity or on a redemption date within one year;

we deposit with the trustee, in trust, funds sufficient to pay the entire indebtedness on the debt securities of that series, including the principal, premium, if any, and interest on such securities, to the date of the deposit (for debt securities that have become due and payable) or to the stated maturity or the redemption date, as the case may be (for debt securities that have not become due and payable);

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we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums payable under the indenture in respect of that series; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officer's certificate and opinion of counsel, each stating that all these conditions have been complied with.

We will remain obligated to provide for registration of transfer and exchange and to pay the principal, premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities.

Defeasance

The following discussion of full defeasance and covenant defeasance will be applicable to your series of debt securities only if we choose to have them apply to that series. If we choose to do so, we will state that in the applicable prospectus supplement and describe any changes to these provisions.

Full Defeasance. If there is a change in federal tax law, as described below, we can legally release ourselves from any payment or other obligations on the debt securities, called "full defeasance", if we put in place the following other arrangements for you to be repaid:

We must deposit in trust for your benefit and the benefit of all other registered holders of the debt securities a combination of money and U.S. government obligations that will generate enough cash to pay principal, premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities on their various due dates.

In order for us to effect a full defeasance, we must deliver to the trustee a legal opinion stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the IRS a ruling, or since the date of the indenture, there has been a change in federal tax law or the judicial interpretation thereof, in either case, to the effect that you will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance and that you will not be taxed on the debt securities any differently than if we did not make the deposit and just repaid the debt securities ourselves.

We must comply with any additional provisions set forth in the prospectus supplement.

If we accomplish a full defeasance, as described above, you would have to rely solely on the trust deposit for repayment on the debt securities. You could not look to us for repayment in the unlikely event of any shortfall. Conversely, the trust deposit would most likely be protected from claims of our lenders and other creditors if we ever become bankrupt or insolvent. You would also be released from any applicable subordination provisions on the subordinated debt securities.

Covenant Defeasance. Under current federal tax law, we can make the same type of deposit described above and be released from the restrictive covenants in the debt securities, if any. This is called "covenant defeasance". In that event, you would lose the protection of those restrictive covenants but would gain the protection of having money and securities set aside in trust to repay the debt securities, and you would be released from any applicable subordination provisions on the subordinated debt securities. In order to achieve covenant defeasance, we must do the following:

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We must deposit in trust for your benefit and the benefit of all other registered holders of the debt securities a combination of money and U.S. government obligations that will generate enough cash to pay principal, premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities on their various due dates.

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We must deliver to the trustee a legal opinion confirming that under then current federal income tax law we may make the above deposit without causing you to be taxed on the debt securities any differently than if we did not make the deposit and just repaid the debt securities ourselves.

We must comply with any additional provisions set forth in the prospectus supplement.

If we accomplish covenant defeasance we will not be subject to certain restrictive covenants in the indenture. You can still look to us for repayment of the debt securities if there were a shortfall in the trust deposit.

Ranking

The debt securities will not be secured by any of our property or assets. Accordingly, your ownership of debt securities means you are one of our unsecured creditors and therefore rank behind our secured creditors to the extent of the collateral securing their claims. Senior debt securities are not subordinated to any of our other debt obligations and therefore they rank equally with all our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. The payment of principal, any premium and interest on the subordinated debt securities is subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness. This means that in certain circumstances where we may not be making payments on all of our debt obligations as they become due, the holders of all of our senior indebtedness will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts that are due or will become due on the senior indebtedness before you and the other holders of subordinated debt securities will be entitled to receive any payment or distribution (other than in the form of subordinated securities) on the subordinated debt securities. In addition, the senior and subordinated debt securities will be effectively subordinated to the indebtedness of our subsidiaries.

The Trustee

The trustee under the indenture will also be the initial paying agent and registrar for the debt securities. The indenture provides that, except during the continuance of an event of default under the indenture, the trustee under the indenture will perform only such duties as are specifically set forth in the indenture. Under the indenture, the holders of a majority in outstanding principal amount of the debt securities will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding or exercising any remedy available to the trustee under the indenture, subject to certain exceptions. If an event of default has occurred and is continuing, the trustee under the indenture will exercise such rights and powers vested in it under the indenture and use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent person would exercise under the circumstances in the conduct of such person's own affairs.

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The indenture and the provisions of the Trust Indenture Act incorporated by reference in the indenture contain limitations on the rights of the trustee under such indenture, should it become a creditor of our company, to obtain payment of claims in certain cases or to realize on certain property received by it in respect of any such claims, as security or otherwise. The trustee under the indenture is permitted to engage in other transactions. However, if the trustee under the indenture acquires any prohibited conflicting interest, it must eliminate the conflict or resign.

The trustee may resign or be removed with respect to one or more series of securities and a successor trustee may be appointed to act with respect to such series. In the event that two or more persons are acting as trustee with respect to different series of securities, each such trustee shall be a trustee of a trust separate and apart from the trust administered by any other such trustee and any action described herein to be taken by the trustee may then be taken by each such trustee with respect to, and only with respect to, the one or more series of securities for which it is trustee.

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

General

The following summary of our common stock does not purport to be complete and is subject in all respects to applicable Delaware law and to the provisions of our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and our Amended and Restated By-Laws, copies of which have been filed with the SEC and may be obtained as described under [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

Our authorized common stock consists of 50,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01 per share. As of September 30, 2003, 24,947,082 shares of common stock were issued and outstanding. All outstanding shares of common stock are fully paid and non-assessable.

Dividend Rights

Holders of our common stock are entitled to receive such dividends as may be declared from time to time by our board of directors out of funds legally available therefor, after payment of dividends required to be paid on outstanding preferred stock, if any.

Voting Rights

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Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote per share on all matters to be voted upon by our stockholders, including the election of directors. The Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation does not provide for cumulative voting in the election of directors. The issuance of any shares of preferred stock may result in dilution of voting power.

Liquidation Rights

In the event of the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the company, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities, subject to prior distribution rights of preferred stock then outstanding, if any.

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Preemptive Rights

Our common stock has no preemptive, conversion or redemption rights.

Certain Charter, By-Law and Delaware Law Provisions

Our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, our Amended and Restated By-Laws and Delaware law contain certain provisions that could make more difficult the acquisition of the company by means of a tender offer, a proxy contest or otherwise.

Preferred Stock. Our board of directors is authorized without further stockholder action to provide for the issuance from time to time of up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, in one or more classes or series. The issuance of preferred stock, while providing flexibility in connection with possible acquisitions and other corporate purposes, could, under certain circumstances, make it more difficult for a third party to gain control of the company, discourage bids for our common stock at a premium, or otherwise adversely affect the market price of the common stock.

Advance Notice Provisions for Stockholder Nominations and Stockholder Proposals. The Amended and Restated By-Laws establish an advance notice procedure for stockholders to make nominations of candidates for election as directors, or to bring other business before an annual meeting of stockholders of the company.

The stockholder notice procedure provides that only persons who are nominated by, or at the direction of, our board of directors, or by a stockholder of the company who is a stockholder of record on the date of notice and who has given timely written notice to the secretary of the company prior to the meeting at which directors are to be elected, will be eligible for election as directors of the company. The stockholder notice procedure provides that at an annual meeting only such business may be conducted as has been specified in the notice of the meeting given by, or at the direction of, our board of directors (or any duly authorized committee thereof) or by a stockholder of record on the date of the giving of notice and on the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to vote at such annual meeting and who has given timely written notice to the secretary of the company of such stockholder's intention to bring such business before such meeting.

Delaware Law. We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law regulating corporate takeovers. In general, Section 203 prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the time that the person became an interested stockholder, unless:

before the person became an interested stockholder, the board of directors of the corporation approved the transaction in which the interested stockholder became an interested stockholder or approved the business combination;

upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation that was outstanding at the time the transaction commenced. For purposes of determining the number of shares outstanding, shares owned by directors who are also officers of the corporation and shares owned by employee stock plans, in specified instances, are excluded; or

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at or after the time the person became an interested stockholder, the business combination is approved by the board of directors of the corporation and authorized at an annual or special meeting of the stockholders by the affirmative vote of at least 66 ²/₃% of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

A business combination is defined generally to include mergers or consolidations between a Delaware corporation and an interested stockholder, transactions with an interested stockholder involving the assets or stock of the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary, transactions that increase an interested stockholder's

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percentage ownership of stock of the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary, and receipt of various financial benefits from the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary. In general, an interested stockholder is defined as any person or entity that is the beneficial owner of at least 15% of a corporation's outstanding voting stock or is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and was the beneficial owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation at any time within the past three years.

A Delaware corporation may opt out of this provision with an express provision in its original certificate of incorporation or an express provision in its certificate of incorporation or by-laws resulting from a stockholders' amendment approved by at least a majority of the outstanding voting shares. However, we have not opted out of this provision. The statute could prohibit or delay mergers or other takeover or change-in-control attempts and, accordingly, may discourage attempts to acquire us.

Limitations of Liability and Indemnification of Directors and Officers. Our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation limits the liability of directors to us and our stockholders to the fullest extent permitted by Delaware law. Specifically, a director will not be personally liable for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except for liability:

for any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to us or our stockholders;

for acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law;

under Section 174 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which concerns unlawful payments of dividends, stock purchases or redemptions; or

for any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

Our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation provides that we shall indemnify our officers and directors to the fullest extent permitted by the Delaware General Corporation Law. We believe that these provisions will assist us in attracting and retaining qualified individuals to serve as directors.

Rights Plan

On August 26, 1998, our board of directors adopted a rights plan. Our rights plan is designed to make it more costly and difficult to gain control of us without the consent of our board. The description presented below is intended as a summary only and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the rights agreement, which is an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Our rights plan provides that each of our shares of common stock will have the right to purchase one one-thousandth of a share of a series of preferred stock, designated as Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$.01 per share, at a price of \$150 per one one-thousandth of a share, subject to customary anti-dilution protection. The rights are attached to all certificates representing outstanding shares of common stock, and no separate rights certificates have been distributed. The rights will not separate from the shares of our common stock until the earliest to occur of (i) a public announcement that, without the prior consent of our board of directors, a person or group, including any affiliates or associates of such person or group (an acquiring person), acquired, or obtained the right to acquire, beneficial ownership of 15% or more of the outstanding common stock or (ii) ten business days (or such later date as our board of directors may determine) following the

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commencement or announcement of an intention (which is not subsequently withdrawn) to make a tender offer or exchange offer which would result in any person or group (and related persons) having beneficial ownership of 15% or more of our outstanding common stock (the stock acquisition date) without the prior consent of our board of directors.

As soon as practicable after the date the rights separate from the common stock certificates separate certificates evidencing the rights will be mailed to holders of record of the common stock as of the close of business on that date, and the separate rights certificates alone will evidence the rights.

The rights are not exercisable until the date the rights separate, and the rights will expire on August 26, 2008, unless earlier redeemed by us as described below.

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The preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of the rights will be nonredeemable and junior to any other series of preferred stock we may issue (unless otherwise provided in the terms of such stock). Each share of preferred stock will have a preferential quarterly dividend in an amount equal to the greater of \$10.00 and 1,000 times the dividend declared on each share common stock. In the event of liquidation, the holders of preferred stock will be entitled to receive a minimum preferred liquidation payment of \$100 per share, provided that they will be entitled to an aggregate payment per share of at least 1,000 times the aggregate payment made per share of common stock. Each share of preferred stock will have one thousand votes, voting together with the common stock. In the event that the amount of accrued and unpaid dividends on the shares of preferred stock is equivalent to at least six full quarterly dividends, the holders of the preferred stock shall have the right, voting as a class, to elect two directors in addition to the directors elected by the holders of the common stock until all dividends in default on the preferred stock have been paid in full and dividends for the current dividend period declared and funds therefor set apart.

In the event that any person becomes an acquiring person, each holder of a right generally will thereafter have the right for a 60-day period after the later of the date of such event and the effectiveness of an appropriate registration statement (or such other longer period set by our board of directors) to receive upon exercise of the right that number of shares of common stock (or under certain circumstances, that number of units of one one-thousandth of a share of preferred stock or other securities) having a value (immediately prior to the occurrence of a person becoming an acquiring person) of two times the purchase price (such right being called the flip-in right). Notwithstanding the foregoing, following the occurrence of a person becoming an acquiring person, all rights that are, or (under certain circumstances specified in the rights agreement) were, beneficially owned by the acquiring person, or any affiliate or associate thereof will be null and void.

In the event that, at any time following the stock acquisition date, (i) we are acquired in a merger or other business combination transaction or (ii) more than 50% of our assets or earning power is sold or transferred, then each holder of a right (except rights which previously have been voided as set forth above) shall thereafter have the right (the flip-over right) to receive, upon exercise, common stock of the acquiring company having a value equal to two times the purchase price. The holder of a right will continue to have the flip-over right whether or not such holder exercises or surrenders the flip-in right.

The number of outstanding rights associated with each share of common stock and the voting and economic rights of each one one-thousandth of a share of preferred stock issuable upon exercise of each right are also subject to adjustment in the event of a stock split of the common stock or a stock dividend on the common stock payable in common stock or subdivisions, consolidations or combinations of the common stock occurring, in any such case, prior to the date the rights separate.

At any time prior to the earliest to occur of (i) the close of business on the stock acquisition date or (ii) the expiration of the rights, we may redeem the rights in whole, but not in part, at a price of \$.01 per right, which redemption shall be effective upon the action of our board of directors. Additionally, we may redeem the then outstanding rights in whole, but not in part, at the redemption price after the triggering of the flip-in right and before triggering the flip-over right in connection with a merger or other business combination transaction or series of transactions involving us in which all holders of common stock are treated alike but not involving an acquiring person (or any person who was an acquiring person) or its affiliates or associates. Upon the effective date of the redemption of the rights, the right to exercise the rights will terminate and the only right of the holders of rights will be to receive the redemption price.

Until a right is exercised, the holder thereof, as such, will have no rights as a shareholder, including, without limitation, the right to vote or to receive dividends.

Except as set forth above, the terms of the rights may be amended by our board of directors, (i) prior to the date the rights separate in any manner, and (ii) on or after the date the rights separate to cure any ambiguity, to correct or supplement any provision of the rights agreement which may be defective or inconsistent with any other provisions, or in any manner not adversely affecting the interests of the holders of the rights (including the interests of any acquiring person), or, subject to certain limitations, to shorten or lengthen any time period under the rights

agreement.

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The rights shall not interfere with any merger or acquisition approved by our board of directors.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Equiserve Trust Company, N.A., Providence, Rhode Island.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

Our authorized preferred stock consists of 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$.01 per share. As of September 30, 2003, no shares of preferred stock were issued and outstanding.

We may issue preferred stock from time to time in one or more classes or series, with the exact terms of each class or series established by our board. Without seeking stockholder approval, our board may issue preferred stock with voting and other rights that could adversely affect the voting power of the holders of our common stock.

The following summarizes the general terms of preferred stock we may issue. We will describe the specific terms of a particular series of preferred stock in the prospectus supplement relating to that series. The description of preferred stock above and the description of the terms of a particular series of preferred stock in the prospectus supplement are not complete. You should refer to the applicable certificate of designation for complete information. The prospectus supplement will contain a description of U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to the preferred stock.

The rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions of the preferred stock of each series will be fixed by the certificate of designation relating to each series. A prospectus supplement relating to each series will specify the terms of the preferred stock, including:

the maximum number of shares in the series and the distinctive designation;

the terms on which dividends, if any, will be paid;

the terms on which the shares may be redeemed, if at all;

the liquidation preference, if any;

the terms of any retirement or sinking fund for the purchase or redemption of the shares of the series;

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the terms and conditions, if any, on which the shares of the series shall be convertible into, or exchangeable for, shares of any other class or classes of capital stock;

the voting rights, if any, on the shares of the series; and

any or all other preferences and relative, participating, operational or other special rights or qualifications, limitations or restrictions of the shares.

The issuance of preferred stock may delay, deter or prevent a change in control.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

The following summarizes the general terms of depositary shares we may offer. The particular terms of any depositary shares we may offer will be described in the prospectus supplement. The description below and in the prospectus supplement is not complete. You should read the form of deposit agreement and the applicable certificate of designation filed with the SEC. The prospectus supplement will contain a description of U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to the depositary shares.

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General

We may, at our option, elect to offer fractional interests in shares of preferred stock, rather than shares of preferred stock. If we exercise that option, we will provide for a depositary to issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest in a share of preferred stock.

The shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares will be deposited under a separate deposit agreement between us and a bank or trust company depositary that has its principal office in the U.S. The prospectus supplement will include the name and address of the depositary. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fractional interest in a share of preferred stock, to all the rights and preferences of the underlying preferred stock, including, dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights. Depositary receipts will be issued for depositary shares.

The depositary may issue temporary depositary receipts substantially identical to, and entitling the holders to all rights pertaining to, the definitive depositary receipts. Definitive depositary receipts will then be prepared thereafter and temporary depositary receipts may be exchanged for definitive depositary receipts at our expense.

Upon surrender of depositary receipts and payment of the charges provided in the deposit agreement, the depositary will deliver the whole shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions on the preferred stock, rounded to the nearest cent, to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the numbers of such depositary shares owned by them on the relevant record date. Fractions of one cent not so distributed will be added to the next sum received by the depositary for distribution to record holders of depositary shares.

In the event of a non-cash distribution, the depositary will, if feasible, distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary shares entitled to them. If the distribution is not feasible, the depositary may sell the property and distribute the net proceeds to such holders.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

If we redeem the preferred stock underlying the depositary shares, the depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds of the redemption of the preferred stock held by the depositary. The depositary will mail notice of redemption not less than 30 or more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for redemption to the record holders of the depositary shares. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable with respect to the preferred stock. Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem the corresponding depositary shares as of the same redemption date. If less than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary will select by lot or pro rata which depositary shares will be redeemed.

After the redemption, the depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be deemed to be outstanding. All rights of the holders of the depositary shares will cease, except the right to receive the money or other property to which the holders are entitled upon redemption and surrender of the depositary receipts for their depositary shares.

Voting the Preferred Stock

The depositary will mail to the holders of depositary shares the information contained in any notice of meeting at which the holders of preferred stock are entitled to vote. Each record holder of depositary shares on the record date for the preferred stock may instruct the depositary to exercise its voting rights with respect to the depositary shares. The depositary will attempt to vote the number of shares of preferred stock underlying such depositary shares in accordance with these instructions. We will agree to take any action required to enable the

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depository to vote the depository shares. The depository will abstain from voting shares of preferred stock to the extent it does not receive instructions from the holders of depository shares relating to that preferred stock.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

We and the depository may amend the form of depository receipt and any provision of the deposit agreement at any time. However, neither of us can make any amendment that would materially and adversely alter the rights of the existing holders of depository shares without approval by the record holders of at least a majority of the outstanding depository shares. We or the depository may terminate a deposit agreement only if:

all outstanding depository shares relating thereto have been redeemed; or

there has been a final distribution to the holders of preferred stock and to the holders of the related depository shares in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Charges of Depository

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the depository arrangements. We will pay charges of the depository in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depository shares will pay transfer and other taxes and governmental charges and any other charges listed in the deposit agreement as holders' charges.

Miscellaneous

The depository will forward to the holders of depository shares all reports and communications that we are required to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock.

Neither we nor the depository will be liable if the law or any circumstance beyond the depository's control prevents it from performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. We and the depository will be required only to perform our and its respective duties in good faith. The depository will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding regarding any depository shares or preferred stock unless the holders of those securities provide it with satisfactory indemnity. The depository may rely on written advice of counsel or accountants, or information provided by persons presenting preferred stock for deposit, holders of depository shares or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

Resignation and Removal of Depository

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering notice to us, and we may at any time remove the depositary. Any such resignation or removal will take effect when a successor depositary is established.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS TO PURCHASE DEBT SECURITIES

The following summarizes the general terms of debt warrants we may offer. The particular terms of any debt warrants will be described in the prospectus supplement. The description below and in the prospectus supplement is not complete. You should read the form of debt warrant agreement filed with the SEC.

General

If we offer debt warrants, the prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the warrants, including:

the offering price, if any;

the designation, aggregate principal amount and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants and the terms of the indenture under which the debt securities will be issued;

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if applicable, the designation and terms of the debt securities with which the debt warrants are issued and the number of debt warrants issued with each debt security;

if applicable, the date on and after which the debt warrants and the related securities will be separately transferable;

the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of one debt warrant, and the price at which the principal amount of debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;

the dates on which the right to exercise the debt warrants begins and expires;

U.S. federal income tax consequences;

whether the warrants represented by the debt warrant certificates will be issued in registered or bearer form;

the currencies in which the offering price and exercise price are payable; and

if applicable, any antidilution provisions.

You may exchange debt warrant certificates for new debt warrant certificates of different denominations and may present debt warrant certificates for registration of transfer at the corporate trust office of the debt warrant agent, which will be listed in the prospectus supplement. Warrantholders do not have any of the rights of holders of debt securities, except to the extent that the consent of warrantholders may be required for certain modifications of the terms of an indenture or form of the debt security, as the case may be, and the series of debt securities issuable upon exercise of the debt warrants. In addition, warrantholders are not entitled to payments of principal of and interest, if any, on the debt securities.

Exercise of Debt Warrants

You may exercise debt warrants by surrendering the debt warrant certificate at the corporate trust office of the debt warrant agent, with payment in full of the exercise price. Upon the exercise of debt warrants, the debt warrant agent will, as soon as practicable, deliver the debt securities in authorized denominations in accordance with your instructions and at your sole cost and risk. If less than all the debt warrants evidenced by the debt warrant certificate are exercised, the agent will issue a new debt warrant certificate for the remaining amount of debt warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS TO PURCHASE COMMON STOCK OR PREFERRED STOCK

The following summarizes the general terms of common stock warrants and preferred stock warrants we may offer. The particular terms of any common stock warrants and preferred stock warrants will be described in the prospectus supplement. The description below and in the prospectus supplement is not complete. You should read the form of warrant agreement filed with the SEC.

General

If we offer stock warrants, the prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the stock warrants, including:

the offering price, if any;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of the preferred stock warrants;

the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of one stock warrant and the initial price at which the shares may be purchased upon exercise;

the dates on which the right to exercise the stock warrants begins and expires;

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U.S. federal income tax consequences;

call provisions, if any;

the currencies in which the offering price and exercise price are payable; and

if applicable, the antidilution provisions of the stock warrants.

The shares of common stock or preferred stock we issue upon exercise of the stock warrants will, when issued in accordance with the stock warrant agreement, be validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

Exercise of Stock Warrants

You may exercise stock warrants by surrendering to the stock warrant agent the stock warrant certificate, which indicates your election to exercise all or a portion of the stock warrants evidenced by the certificate. Surrendered stock warrant certificates must be accompanied by payment of the exercise price in the form of cash or check. The stock warrant agent will deliver certificates evidencing duly exercised stock warrants to the transfer agent. Upon receipt of the certificates, the transfer agent will deliver a certificate representing the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchased. If you exercise fewer than all the stock warrants evidenced by any certificate, the stock warrant agent will deliver a new stock warrant certificate representing the unexercised stock warrants.

No Rights as Stockholders

Holders of stock warrants are not entitled to vote, to consent, to receive dividends or to receive notice as stockholders with respect to any meeting of stockholders or to exercise any rights whatsoever as our stockholders.

DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE UNITS AND STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS

The following summarizes the general terms of stock purchase units and stock purchase contracts we may offer. The particular terms of any stock purchase units or stock purchase contracts we offer will be described in the prospectus supplement. The description below and in the prospectus supplement is not complete. You should read the form of stock purchase contract filed with the SEC. The prospectus supplement will contain a description of U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to the stock purchase units and stock purchase contracts.

We may issue stock purchase contracts that obligate you to purchase from us, and obligate us to sell to you, a specified or varying number of shares of common stock or preferred stock at a future date or dates. We may fix the consideration per share of common stock or preferred stock at the time we issue the stock purchase contracts, or the consideration may be determined by reference to a specific formula stated in the stock

purchase contracts. We may issue the stock purchase contracts separately or as a part of stock purchase units consisting of a stock purchase contract and debt securities, preferred stock or debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. Treasury securities, which secure the holders obligations to purchase the common stock or preferred stock under the stock purchase contracts. The stock purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the stock purchase units or vice versa. These payments may be unsecured or prefunded and may be paid on a current or deferred basis. The stock purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations in a specified manner.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities offered by this prospectus to one or more underwriters or dealers for public offering, through agents, directly to purchasers or through a combination of any such methods of sale. The name of any such underwriter, dealer or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities, the amounts underwritten and the nature of its obligation to take the securities will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. We have reserved the right to sell the securities directly to investors on our own behalf in those jurisdictions where we are authorized to do so. The sale of the securities may be effected in transactions (a) on any national or international securities exchange or quotation service on which the securities may be listed or quoted at the time of sale, (b) in the

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over-the-counter market, (c) in transactions otherwise than on such exchanges or in the over-the-counter market or (d) through the writing of options.

Unless indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we do not expect to apply to list the securities on a securities exchange, except for shares of our common stock, which are listed on the NYSE.

We and our agents and underwriters, may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices that may be changed, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. The securities may be offered on an exchange, which will be disclosed in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may, from time to time, authorize dealers, acting as our agents, to offer and sell the securities upon such terms and conditions as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we use underwriters to sell securities, we will enter into an underwriting agreement with them at the time of the sale to them. In connection with the sale of the securities, underwriters may receive compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agent. Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement to the extent required by applicable law. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions (which may be changed from time to time) from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents.

Dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, an agent will be acting on a best efforts basis and a dealer will purchase debt securities as a principal, and may then resell the debt securities at varying prices to be determined by the dealer.

If so indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain specified institutions to purchase offered 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. Such contracts will be subject to any conditions set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement and the prospectus supplement will set forth the commission payable for solicitation of such contracts. The underwriters and other persons soliciting such contracts will have no responsibility for the validity or performance of any such contracts.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us, to indemnification against and contribution towards certain civil liabilities, including any liabilities under the Securities Act.

To facilitate the offering of securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain, or otherwise affect the price of the securities. These may include over-allotment, stabilization, syndicate, short covering transactions and penalty bids. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which creates a short position. Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Syndicate short covering transactions involve purchases of securities in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim selling concessions from dealers when the securities originally sold by the dealers are purchased in covering transactions to cover syndicate short positions. These transactions may cause the price of the securities sold in an offering to be higher than it would otherwise be. These transactions, if commenced, may be discontinued by the underwriters at any time.

Any securities other than our common stock issued hereunder may be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters or agents to or through whom such securities are sold for public offering and sale may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters or agents will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for any such securities. The amount of expenses expected to be incurred by us in connection with any issuance of securities will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Certain of the

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underwriters, dealers or agents and their associates may engage in transactions with, and perform services for, us and certain of our affiliates and in the ordinary course of our business.

Broker-dealers, if any, acting in connection with these sales might be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of section 2(11) of the Securities Act. Any commission they receive and any profit upon the resale of the securities might be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act.

During such time as we may be engaged in a distribution of the securities covered by this prospectus, we are required to comply with Regulation M promulgated under the Exchange Act. With certain exceptions, Regulation M precludes us, any affiliated purchasers, and any broker-dealer or other person who participates in such distribution from bidding for or purchasing, or attempting to induce any person to bid for or purchase any security which is the subject of the distribution until the entire distribution is complete. Regulation M also restricts bids or purchases made in order to stabilize the price of a security in connection with the distribution of that security. All of the foregoing may affect the marketability of our common stock.

LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement, the validity of any common stock and preferred stock issued and sold by us hereunder will be passed upon for us by Gardner Carton & Douglas LLP, and the validity of any debt securities, depositary shares, securities warrants, stock purchase contracts and stock purchase units issued and sold by us hereunder that are governed by New York law will be passed upon for us by Arnold & Porter.

EXPERTS

The financial statements incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended March 31, 2003 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.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****ITEM 14. OTHER EXPENSES OF ISSUANCE AND DISTRIBUTION**

The following table sets forth all fees and expenses payable by the registrant in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered hereby. All of such expenses, except the SEC registration fee, are estimated.

| | |
|---|------------|
| Securities and Exchange Commission registration fee | \$ 32,360 |
| Legal fees and expenses | \$ 125,000 |
| Trustee s fees and expenses | \$ 25,000 |
| Rating agency fees | \$ 205,750 |
| Accounting fees and expenses | \$ 75,000 |
| Printing expenses | \$ 100,000 |
| Miscellaneous | \$ 36,890 |
| | <hr/> |
| Total | \$ 600,000 |
| | <hr/> |

ITEM 15. INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS**LIMITATION ON LIABILITY OF DIRECTORS**

Section 145(a) of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware (the "DGCL") provides that a Delaware corporation may 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, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation) by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation or enterprise, against expenses, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if he 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 cause to believe his conduct was unlawful.

Section 145(b) of the DGCL provides that a Delaware corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that such person acted in any of the capacities set forth above, against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with the defense or settlement of such action or suit if he or she acted under similar standards to those set forth above, except that no indemnification may be made in respect to any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable to the corporation 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, but in view of all the circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to be indemnified for such expenses which the court shall deem proper.

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Section 145 of the DGCL further provides that to the extent a director or officer of a corporation has been successful in the defense of any action, suit or proceeding referred to in subsections (a) and (b) or in the defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection therewith; that indemnification provided for by Section 145 shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which the indemnified party may be entitled; and that the corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a director or officer of the corporation against any liability asserted against such officer or director and incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liabilities under Section 145.

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As permitted by Section 102(b)(7) of the DGCL, our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation provides that a director shall not be personally liable to us or our stockholders for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director. However, such provision does not eliminate or limit the liability of a director: (i) for any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the Company or its stockholders, (ii) for acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law, (iii) under Section 174 of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware, or (iv) for engaging in any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit. Our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation requires that directors and officers be indemnified to the fullest extent authorized by the DGCL, or any other applicable law or amendments thereunder; however, in the case of any amendments, only to the extent such amendment permits us to provide broader indemnification rights than permitted prior thereto.

Any underwriting agreements that we may enter into will likely provide for the indemnification of the registrant, its controlling persons, its directors and certain of its officers by the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

We have directors' liability insurance, which insures the directors and officers against the cost of defense, settlement or payment of a judgment under certain circumstances.

ITEM 16. EXHIBITS

The exhibits to this registration statement are listed in the Exhibit Index to this registration statement, which Exhibit Index is hereby incorporated by reference.

ITEM 17. UNDERTAKINGS

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

- (a)(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;
 - (ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this 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 this registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in the 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 maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Securities and Exchange 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;
 - (iii) to include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in this registration statement or any material change to such information in this 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 by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities

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Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement.

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- (2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each post-effective amendment that contains a form of prospectus 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.

- (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, 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.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers or persons controlling the registrant, the registrant has been informed that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification 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 Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to file an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the trustee to act under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Securities and Exchange Commission under Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act.

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Registration Statement No. 333-109383

filed on October 2, 2003

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Table of Contents**Index to Exhibits**

| Exhibit | Description |
|----------------|--|
| 1.1** | Form of Underwriting Agreement. |
| 4.1 | Rights Agreement dated as of August 27, 1998 between SOLA International Inc. and Bank of Boston N.A. (filed as Exhibit 1 to the Company's Form 8-A dated August 27, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference (File No. 1-13606)). |
| 4.2 | Indenture by and between the Company and State Street Bank and Trust Company of California, N.A., as Trustee, dated as of March 19, 1998 (filed as Exhibit 10.21 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference (File No. 1-13606)). |
| 4.3 | Officers' Certificate Related to Terms of the 6-7/8% Senior Notes due 2008 (filed as Exhibit 99.1 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the period ended June 30, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference (File No. 1-13606)). |
| 4.4 | Indenture dated as of April 17, 2001 by and between the Company and The Bank of New York, as Trustee, with respect to the 11% Notes due 2008 (filed as Exhibit 4.4 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference). |
| 4.5 | Registration Rights Agreement dated as of April 17, 2001 by and among the Company and UBS AG acting through its business group UBS Warburg, as Initial Purchaser, with respect to the 11% Notes due 2008 (filed as Exhibit 4.5 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference). |
| 4.6 | Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation of the Company (filed as Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1995 and incorporated herein by reference (File No. 1-13606)). |
| 4.7 | Amended and Restated By-Laws of the Company (filed as Exhibit 3 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the period ended September 30, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference (File No. 1-13606)). |
| 4.8** | Form of Deposit Agreement. |
| 4.9** | Form of Warrant Agreement. |
| 4.10** | Form of Stock Purchase Contract. |
| 5.1* | Opinion of Gardner Carton & Douglas. |
| 5.2* | Opinion of Arnold & Porter. |
| 12.1*** | Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges. |
| 23.1* | Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Independent Accountants. |
| 23.2* | Consent of Gardner Carton & Douglas (included in Exhibit 5.1). |
| 23.3* | Consent of Arnold & Porter (included in Exhibit 5.2). |
| 24.1*** | Powers of Attorney (included on the signature page). |
| 25.1** | Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility and Qualification under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. |

* Filed herewith.

** To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a document to be incorporated by reference herein in connection with an offering of the offered securities.

*** Filed on October 2, 2003 as part of this Registration Statement.