

EXHIBIT A

DESCRIPTION OF SDC® SEARCH SERVICE

The SDC Search Service is a proprietary service of System Development Corporation (SDC), offering an online retrieval service on a wide variety of databases, both technical and non-technical, to users that include commercial organizations, academic institutions, and government agencies throughout the world.

SDC now provides an operational service on private and public databases, the full range of those publicly available databases offered by SDC being shown in Exhibit C.

The SDC Search Service permits an authorized subscriber to the system to access databases residing in computer memory, using an electronic data terminal and coupler or data set, transmitting signals over local telephone lines, and domestic and international communication lines.

SDC operates its Search Service utilizing its proprietary database access and management system known as ORBIT®. ORBIT resides in a large scale computer located at SDC's Corporate Computer Facility, Santa Monica, California, with the publicly available databases stored on disks.

SDC Search Service and ORBIT will substantially perform the following functions, although SDC HEREBY SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIMS ANY WARRANTIES OF ANY NATURE WHATSOEVER REGARDING PERFORMANCE INCLUDING THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE:

- A. 15 million records online
- B. Virtual around-the-clock online database access
- C. Fast system response to subscriber terminal inquiries
- D. Permits searchers to acquire offline print-outs of database abstracts.
- E. Provides the "Electronic Mailbox*", which permits users to place orders online for full-text, hard copy or microfiche of database inquiries.

Some of the outstanding features of both the Service and the ORBIT program are:

- A. The natural-language interaction of ORBIT programs
- B. Special searching capabilities--such as multiple-term entries, the Restack Command, full and limited truncation, and fast response.

® Registered trademark of SDC

* Trademark of System Development Corporation