VASTOX
REDEFINING DRUG DISCOVERY

VASTOX RECEIVES POSITIVE ORPHAN DRUG DESIGNATION OPINION FROM THE EMEA FOR ITS DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY THERAPY

Oxford, UK, 22 June 2006 – VASTox (AIM: VOX), a leading chemical genomics company, announces today that the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) has recommended awarding orphan drug designation for the company's initial compound for the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD).

The orphan drug application has received a positive opinion from the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products (COMP) of EMEA. VASTox expects the formal approval from the European Commission within the next 30 days. The European Commission has never failed to ratify a positive opinion from EMEA.

Orphan drug designation in Europe provides VASTox with ten years of market exclusivity following market approval. This protection is in addition to any intellectual property rights that cover the product which is marketed. In addition, the designation provides VASTox with support and assistance throughout the drug development process, including waiving significant regulatory costs before a drug reaches the market.

EMEA grants orphan drug designation to medical products that satisfy a number of criteria, including the severity of the disease for which they will be used, the prevalence of the disease in Europe and the lack of alternative treatments. Duchenne muscular dystrophy satisfies these criteria and VASTox was able to show that the company's approach to treat this condition (i.e. the up-regulation of utrophin) could be of significant benefit to these patients for which there are at present very limited treatment options.

DMD is the company's most advanced drug development programme. At present the company is working on selecting a lead drug candidate. This important milestone is expected to be reached by Q1 2007, with clinical trials forecast to start a year afterwards.

Steven Lee, PhD, CEO of VASTox said: "I am very pleased that VASTox has received this positive opinion from the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products. Receiving orphan drug designation is an important step for the company; it validates our unique approach to the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy while at the same time it will reduce the costs of developing what we hope will be a major advance in the treatment of this devastating neuromuscular disease."

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About VASTox plc

VASTox is a chemical genomics technology company that discovers and develops proprietary novel drugs and provides services to the pharmaceutical industry. The company's most advanced drug development programme is focused on developing a new treatment for Duchenne muscular dystrophy based on the up-regulation of utrophin. A second drug development programme for spinal muscular atrophy is also progressing rapidly. VASTox has three additional programmes focused on osteoarthritis, cancer and tuberculosis that are expected to be out-licensed prior to entering the clinic.

The company's technology platform, which uses zebrafish and fruitflies, has the potential to dramatically decrease the time and cost of drug discovery and development. This is because using whole organisms allows it to carry out high volume, high content screening that delivers data which is highly predictive of the efficacy and toxicity of potential drug compounds in humans. VASTox is growing revenues based on marketing its unique technology platform and its chemistry expertise. The company listed on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange in October 2004.

Further information about the company is available at www.vastox.com.