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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARKEL VENTURES ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF COTTRELL

Richmond, VA, July 23, 2014 — Markel Ventures, Inc. ("Markel") announced today the acquisition of a majority interest in Cottrell, Inc. and affiliated entities ("Cottrell"). Headquartered in Gainesville, Georgia, Cottrell is a global leader in the design, manufacture and delivery of over-the-road automobile transport equipment. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Danny Zink, Cottrell's President and CEO, stated, "We wanted to find a partner that understood the way we do business and that would support us as we continue down the path we started on over 35 years ago. Markel is clearly that partner."

Thomas S. Gayner, President of Markel Ventures, added, "For 35 years Cottrell has found success by staying close to its customers and by responding rapidly to their needs. Our approach allows Cottrell to continue doing exactly that as a permanent member of the Markel Ventures group of companies."

About Markel Ventures

Markel Ventures, Inc. (www.markelventures.com) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Markel Corporation (NYSE: MKL). Markel Ventures makes strategic and generally controlling investments in businesses that operate outside of the specialty insurance marketplace. The primary goal of Markel Ventures is to positively contribute to the long-term financial performance of Markel Corporation through the value creating operating activities of its subsidiaries.

About Markel Corporation

Markel Corporation is a diverse financial holding company serving a variety of niche markets. The Company's principal business markets and underwrites specialty insurance products. In each of the Company's businesses, it seeks to provide quality products and excellent customer service so that it can be a market leader. The financial goals of the Company are to earn consistent underwriting and operating profits and superior investment returns to build shareholder value. Visit Markel Corporation on the web at www.markelcorp.com.

This release contains statements concerning or incorporating the company's expectations, assumptions, plans, objectives, future financial or operating performance and other statements that are not historical facts. These statements are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. There are risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from predicted results in forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ from those predicted are set forth under "Risk Factors" and "Safe Harbor and Cautionary Statement" in Markel Corporation's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q.