

# Texas Animal Emergency Management Summit

## Tuesday, July 30, 2019

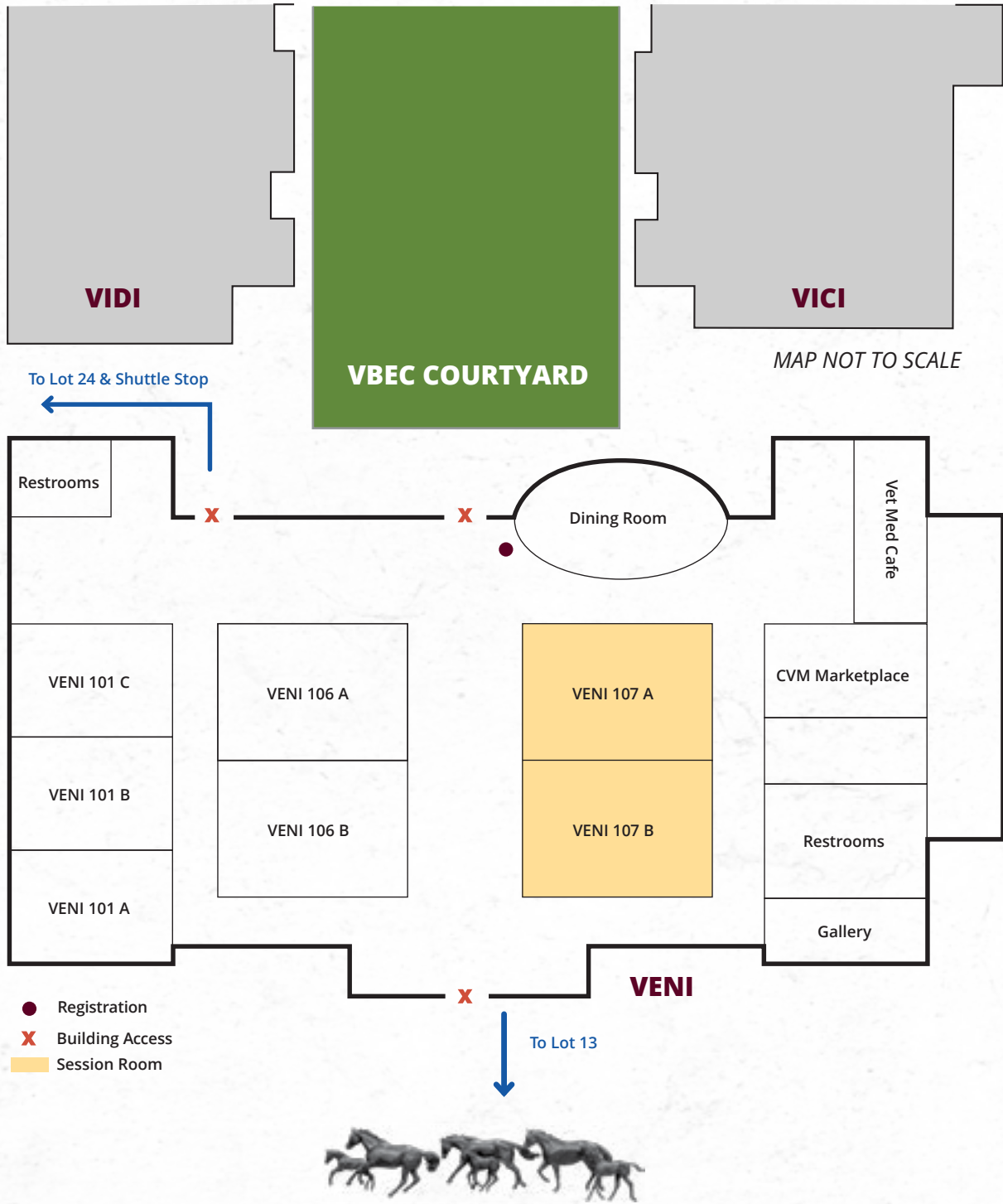
*Veterinary & Biomedical Education Complex (VBEC) – VENI 1st Floor Commons*

7:30–8:15 a.m.	<b>Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</b>
<i>VENI 107 A/B</i>	
8:15–8:45 a.m.	<b>Opening Remarks</b>
8:45–10:15 a.m.	<p><b>Integrating Animal-Focused Response Efforts: The Camp Wildfire Experience</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>Dr. Wesley Bissett and Bryan Davis will share their experiences during the Texas A&amp;M University System response to the Camp Wildfire in northern California, which was one of the costliest, most destructive, and deadliest wildfires in our nation’s history. Animal-related issues overwhelmed local and state response efforts. This discussion will provide a perspective on what the problems were and how they were solved.</p>
10:15–10:30 a.m.	<b>Break—Drinks and light snacks provided</b>
10:30–12:00 p.m.	<p><b>Solving the “Animal Problem”: An Integrated Approach</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>Moderated by Texas A&amp;M VET’s Deb Zoran and Noberto Espitia, this panel discussion will feature Butch Davis, Walker County, Texas Emergency Management Coordinator, and Jason Ott and Rachael Bauer, Texas A&amp;M AgriLife Extension Agents from Nueces and Bastrop County, respectively, offering insights into best practices for solving animal-related issues and a frank discussion on problems remaining to be solved.</p>
12:00–1:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch—Meal provided</b>
1:00–1:30 p.m.	<p><b>The Texas Situation: Risks and Hazards to Consider in Planning for Animals</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>Texas’ size and complexity has resulted in a diverse array of potential incidents that may impact citizens and their animals. Tony Pena, Texas Division of Emergency Management’s Region 3 State Coordinator, will provide an overview of these risks and hazards, as well as a status update on the Texas Division of Emergency Management.</p>
1:30–2:00 p.m.	<p><b>Infectious Disease Risks in Texas</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>Angela Daniels, Assistant Executive Director of the Texas Animal Health Commission, will discuss the broad array of infectious disease risks in Texas.</p>
2:00–2:30 p.m.	<p><b>Zoos and Exotic Animal Facilities—Additional Planning Factors</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>Dr. Cindy DiGesualdo, from USDA Animal Care, will discuss zoos and exotic animal facilities and how they need to be considered in local emergency planning efforts. Dr. DiGesualdo will also discuss how the zoo community is preparing to assist local communities and other zoo communities during disaster incidents.</p>
2:30–2:45 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
2:45–4:45 p.m.	<p><b>The Texas Model of Emergency Management</b> <span style="float: right;">CE Credit: <input type="checkbox"/></span></p> <p>An overview of state-level resources available in Texas and the processes for acquiring them will be provided by Dr. Angela Daniels, from the Texas Animal Health Commission; Bryan Davis, from Texas A&amp;M AgriLife Extension; Dr. Wesley Bissett, from the Texas A&amp;M Veterinary Emergency Team; and Dr. Dawn Blackmar, from the Houston SPCA.</p> <p>In addition, an overview of national and federal resources and how assistance from them may be acquired will be discussed by Jeffrey Dudensing, from USDA FSA; Dr. Cindy Digesualdo, from USDA Animal Care; Eric Thomas, from Code 3 NAARSC; and Kristy Oates, from NRCS.</p>
4:45–5 p.m.	<b>Final Comments &amp; Dismissal</b>

# Venue Map

## VETERINARY & BIOMEDICAL EDUCATION COMPLEX (VBEC)

660 RAYMOND STOTZER PARKWAY | COLLEGE STATION, TX 77843



RAYMOND STOTZER PARKWAY

# Speaker Biographies

## **Wesley Bissett, DVM**

### **Associate professor and Director, Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team**

Dr. Wesley Bissett is an associate professor and director of the Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team (VET). He received his DVM from Texas A&M University in 1997.

After three years in a private practice that he owned, developed, and operated, Dr. Bissett returned to Texas A&M as a member of the faculty and completed a Ph.D. in microbiology, with a focus in environmental epidemiology, while also being actively involved with clinical and teaching activities in the food animal section of the Large Animal Clinical Sciences Department.

Following the experiences of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the campus and region, he became focused on disaster preparedness and response and a leader in the college's new initiatives to respond to animal issues during emergencies and disasters. In 2009, Hurricane Ike impacted Texas and initiated the formation of the Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team at the request of the Texas Animal Health Commission and Division of Emergency Management.

Dr. Bissett has been the director of the VET since its inception and has presided over the development of a 100-person team with assets valued at approximately \$4 million. In addition, he has led the development of the nation's first required clinical rotation in emergency preparedness and response.

## **Angela Daniels, DVM**

### **Assistant Executive Director, Animal Health Programs, Texas Animal Health Commission**

Dr. Angela Daniels is the assistant executive director of TAHC Animal Health Programs. She completed both her B.S. and DVM degrees at Iowa State University.

Prior to joining TAHC, Dr. Daniels worked in the integrated swine industry for three years, gaining experience with needle-free injections, biosecurity, food safety, and swine production and medicine.

She moved from swine practice to dairy practice and in 2004 started Circle H Headquarters, LLC, a livestock consultation practice with an animal diagnostic laboratory and contract research facility. She worked extensively with new dairies in the Texas Panhandle region in areas including milk quality, reproduction, and employee training. Dr. Daniels sold her business in 2018 and joined TAHC.

## **Cynthia "Cyndi" Digesualdo, DVM**

### **Veterinary Medical Officer, Animal Care, United States Department of Agriculture Silicon Valley Veterinary Specialists**

Dr. Cindy DiGesualdo is a veterinary medical officer (VMO) with USDA Animal Care. As a VMO, she ensures that animals covered under the Animal Welfare Act are treated humanely.

USDA Animal Care is tasked with providing guidance on the safety and well-being of pets and other animals during disasters. Cindy has been involved with expanding this mission to include captive wildlife and exotic animals.

Prior to joining USDA she was a practicing veterinarian in companion animal clinics and zoological facilities.

## **Norberto F. Espitia, Ph.D.**

### **Manager of Academic Programs Support, Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences**

Dr. Norberto F. Espitia is the manager of academic programs support for the Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences at Texas A&M University. He has maintained continuous employment in the department since January 1977.

Dr. Espitia received his Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Science (1976), Master of Science in epidemiology (1985), and Doctor of Philosophy in agricultural education (2008) from Texas A&M University. His professional areas of interest include academic program assessment and

program development.

Dr. Espitia is a founding member of the Veterinary Emergency Team (VET) who serves as the Safety and Plans Officer. He has participated in every deployment with the VET since its inception, including the responses to the Bastrop Complex Wildfire in 2011; the West, Texas, fertilizer plant explosion in 2013; the Blanco River Flood in 2015; and the Brazos River Floods in 2016.

### **A.A. "Tony" Peña Jr., TEM**

#### **State Coordinator, Field Response Section, Texas Division of Emergency Management**

An honorably discharged enlisted U.S. Marine, Tony Peña Jr. served in law enforcement from 1977-1994 with the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office, McAllen Police Department, Texas State Board of Medical Examiners, and the Hidalgo County Constable's Office, where he currently maintains his peace officer commission. He worked in the private sector for about 10 years before returning to the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office as a commander in 2005 until 2007, when he was appointed as the Hidalgo County emergency management coordinator and as interim county fire marshal until 2011, when he went to work for the Texas Department of Public Safety. While at Hidalgo County, he also served as the Lone Star All-Hazards Incident Management Team leader and coordinator for the Rio Grande Valley.

Currently serving as one of seven state coordinators within the Field Response Section of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, he is primary responsible for DPS Region 3, consisting of 27 Deep South Texas Counties, including Del Rio, Laredo, Rio Grande Valley, and Corpus Christi. This is the only region in Texas affected by natural and manmade threats from the Gulf Coast and the U.S./Mexico Border. Peña maintains his designation as a Master Peace Officer, is a Certified Texas Emergency Manager, and a graduate of DPS Command College Cohort 2 Class.

His responses include serving as local wildfire response task coordinator for the 2007/2008 fire season in South Texas, which culminated in a 56,000-acre fire; Hurricane Dolly in the Rio Grande

Valley; co-leading the 134 people Public Works Task Force in response to Hurricane Ike devastation on Galveston Island; Hurricane Alex and subsequent Rio Grande River flooding, and a 64-day, 24/7, water relocation response. He also initiated the Rio Grande Valley Regional Radio Communications System.

As state coordinator, his responses include the Tri-County Fire response in East Texas, a winter storm in North Texas, wide-area searches for missing persons, numerous law enforcement support missions, and Operation Secure Texas. In 2017, he oversaw emergency management response to Hurricane Harvey during a two-month deployment to the Coastal Bend area. He continues to respond and oversee emergency management operations in South Texas and other parts of the state, as needed.

### **Jeff Turner**

#### **Emergency Management Coordinator, Texas Animal Health Commission**

Jeff Turner is the emergency management coordinator for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC).

Prior to working for TAHC, Jeff was an emergency management coordinator for Hays County in Central Texas for more than 7 years and was instrumental in the development of the Animals' Issues Committee within his jurisdiction, as well as the Capitol Area Animal Issues Committee.

Before his tenure with Hays County, Jeff worked as a regional fire coordinator with the Texas Forest Service, with which he served on the State of Texas Incident Management Team.

Jeff is a Certified Emergency Manager; Certified in Homeland Security; a Level 1 Continuity of Operations Planner; certified to teach incident management ICS/NIMS; is a member of the Capitol Area Incident Management Team; and remains a certified firefighter and medic. Jeff also has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Business Management.

**Deb Zoran, DVM**

**Professor of Small Animal Medicine, Texas A&M  
College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical  
Sciences;**

**Founding Member, Texas A&M Veterinary  
Emergency Team**

Dr. Deb Zoran is a professor of small animal medicine and a founding member, in 2009, of the Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team (VET). She is also a member of Texas A&M Task Force 1 Urban Search & Rescue, serving as a medical specialist and primary support of the S&R canines.

A 1984 graduate of Kansas State University, Dr. Zoran has a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in animal nutrition and is board certified in small animal internal medicine. As a professor, Dr. Zoran is a key leader in both the development and delivery of the nation's only required clinical rotation in disaster preparedness and response for fourth-year veterinary students.

In the past 10 years, Dr. Zoran been deployed 17 times with the VET for numerous major disasters within the State of Texas, including wildfires, floods, several tornadoes, and, recently, Hurricane Harvey. She has deployed out of Texas to flooding in Louisiana and, this past year, to California in response to the devastating Camp Fire.

**Thank you for attending the  
2019 Texas Animal Emergency Management  
Summit.**



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