Dear Family and Friends:

We have been keeping busy with mission prep and getting settled in the desert environment that is Kandahar and the surrounding environs. Since none of have reached our final destination we are still being housed in temporary tent quarters.

This picture taken today, Cherokee and Cowboy in Team Swamp Fox temporary quarters named by Cherokee as the “taj mah hooch”
From Left to Right: Ink, Joker, Spider Monkey, Grinds, “Santa,” and Boss at the KBR dining facility. Santa is not a member of Swamp Fox and that is not his “callsign,” but given by me to share with you all how important Santa was to us all when we arrived here. This Santa hails from Anderson, SC and had just completed a year of combat in Afghanistan. A friend of Boss from back in SC, Santa daily presented us with gifts that are mission essential and introduced us to those that could help us with our needs for mission prep and arranged range time to reconfirm our weapon zeros on the range. He even intentionally delayed his departure for three days to ensure we were settled in and well on the way to getting all we needed. Thanks Santa!
Spider Monkey getting his ACOG zeroed
Cowboy getting his ACOG zeroed
MacGyver getting his ACOG zeroed
Left to Right: Cherokee (blurred) Spider Monkey, Orion, Joker, Cowboy, Doc, Grinds, Ghost and Boss attending a mission planning brief.
MacGyver gives Orion an IV. Combat lifesaver skills important to practice over and over and over.
Spider Monkey preps his Combat Lifesaver Bags by organizing them for quick and easy access at day or night.
Baaboo, a victim of a drive-by IV... (Baaboo is Dari for Grandfather and he is a returning ETT – this is his second rodeo and his experience as well as the Shaft and Gambler who have been here before has been invaluable.)
Ink gives Doc and IV to test his skills… (Doc and Ink are both Iraq War veterans and veterans of other conflicts as well… Ink was in Desert Storm, the first Gulf War and Doc was in Mogadishu with the 160th SOAR when US Blackhawk helos were shot down as told in the book and movie Black Hawk Down. Each has invaluable previous combat experience which takes us beyond the field manuals to getting us ready with what we really need to succeed.

Team Swamp Fox is an extraordinary group of soldiers, all bringing skills, expertise and experience in a variety of skill sets and everyone has contributed to the successful experience we had training at Fort Riley and no doubt everyone will continue to contribute to the success of the mission.