

AFR Cryptic (Saturday 14/2/2026) Solution

¹ O	F	² F	T	³ H	E	⁴ R	E	⁵ C	O	⁶ R	D				
R		R		A		O		A		A		⁷ O		⁸ B	
⁹ C	R	A	W	L		¹⁰ V	I	R	U	L	E	N	C	E	
H		M		I		E		D		L		C		A	
¹¹ A	L	E	R	T	S		¹² E	A	S	Y	M	A	R	K	
R				O				M				M		E	
¹³ D	E	¹⁴ L	I	S	H		¹⁵ C	O	M	¹⁶ E	N	E	A	R	
		Y		I		¹⁷ I		M		X		R			
¹⁸ P	H	R	A	S	I	N	G		¹⁹ T	E	N	A	N	²⁰ T	
U		E				F				C				R	
²¹ R	E	B	E	²² L	L	E	D		²³ T	R	A	²⁴ U	M	A	
I		I		O		R		²⁵ R		A		N		G	
²⁶ S	E	R	I	A	L	I	S	E		²⁷ B	A	D	G	E	
T		D		F		O		A		L		I		D	
				²⁸ U	S	E	R	F	R	I	E	N	D	L	Y

Across	Clue	Explanation
1 OFF THE RECORD	Private - he put in effort changing line (3,3,6)	HE inside anagram of EFFORT + CORD
9 CRAWL	Some swimming enclosure that contains fish (5)	Double Definition
10 VIRULENCE	Rule broken ultimately in evil hostility (9)	[RULE + broke(N)] inside VICE
11 ALERTS	Retreating detachment from outpost relayed warnings (6)	outpoST RELAYed reversed
12 EASY MARK	Gull soiled my sea vessel (4,4)	Anagram of MY SEA + ARK
13 DELISH	Yummy food served stuffed by the Spanish (6)	DISH outside EL
15 COME NEAR	Approach company auditor about staff (4,4)	(CO + EAR) outside MEN
18 PHRASING	Harp retuned to make melody for musical arrangement (8)	Anagram of HARP + SING
19 TENANT	Section of camp making room for an occupant (6)	TENT outside AN
21 REBELLED	Attractive woman taken in by red rose (8)	BELLE inside RED
23 TRAUMA	Energy expended by amateur out of condition and suffering (6)	Anagram of AMATEUR minus E
26 SERIALISE	Retired show-off is brought in to view broadcast periodically (9)	[LAIR reversed + IS) inside SEE
27 BADGE	Identification may be no good, for example, when used the wrong way (5)	BAD + (EG reversed)
28 USER-FRIENDLY	Cooked fillets of redfin surely should be easy to handle? (4-8)	Anagram of REDFIN SURELY

