

AFR Cryptic (Saturday 10/10/2026) Solution

¹ F	L	² E	A	³ B	I	⁴ T	E		⁵ B	⁶ A	L	⁷ L	A	⁸ D
O		R		A		O		⁹ S		B		O		O
¹⁰ R	I	G	H	T		¹¹ S	A	L	E	S	R	O	O	M
E		O		M		S		O		O		P		E
¹² F	U	N	D	A	M	E	N	T	A	L	I	S	T	
A		O		N		D		C		U				¹³ R
¹⁴ T	O	M	E				¹⁵ P	A	R	T	¹⁶ Y	¹⁶ P	I	E
H		I		¹⁷ A		¹⁸ A	I	R		E		I		I
¹⁹ E	X	C	U	S	E	M	E				²⁰ E	T	O	N
R					W		B		²¹ S		²² C		A	V
	²³ I	²⁴ R	R	E	P	R	O	A	C	H	A	B	L	E
²⁵ E		I		L		O		D		E		R		N
²⁶ P	E	N	A	L	I	S	E	D		²⁷ E	V	E	N	T
I		G		A		E		L		S		A		E
²⁸ C	H	O	O	S	E		²⁹ D	E	F	E	N	D	E	D

Across	Clue	Explanation
1 FLEABITE	A piece secured by bolt is a slight inconvenience (8)	(A + BIT) inside FLEE
5 BALLAD	Everyone sitting tight during dreadful song (6)	ALL inside BAD
10 RIGHT	What authors do in speech appropriately (5)	Sounds like WRITE
11 SALESROOM	Vessel with cargo of alcohol returned to secure marketing area (9)	(ALE inside SS) + MOOR reversed
12 FUNDAMENTALIST	Strict, amusing lady, not heartless, people wanted for events? (14)	FUN + DAME + N(o)T + ALIST
14 TOME	It should be read as far as I'm concerned (4)	TO ME
15 PARTY PIE	One tucked into standard variety finger food (5,3)	I inside (PAR + TYPE)
18 AIR	Broadcast couple with no introduction (3)	(p)AIR
19 EXCUSE ME	Former copper missed initially in court's apology (6,2)	EX + CU + [(M)issed inside SEE]
20 ETON	English school some compare to Newington (4)	comparE TO Newington
23 IRREPROACHABLE	Faultless Irish preacher Albo misinterpreted (14)	IR + anagram of PREACHER + ALBO
26 PENALISED	Is deal reviewed after writer is punished for breaking rules? (9)	Anagram of IS DEAL after PEN
28 CHOOSE	Pick out carbon ring wedged in flexible pipe (6)	C + (O inside HOSE)
29 DEFENDED	Justified government employee rolled over (8)	FED reversed + ENDED

Down	Clue	Explanation
1 FOREFATHER	Predecessor of retired referee with a change of heart (10)	OF reversed + REF + anagram of HEART
2 ERGONOMIC	Move by number in organised crime designed to maximise efficiency (9)	(GO + NO) inside anagram of CRIME
3 BATMAN	Crime fighter is not far from bank with ATM installed (6)	(BAN)k outside ATM
4 TOSSED	Threw and kicked around empty sacks? (6)	TOED outside S(ack)S
6 ABSOLUTE	Complete slob found drunk inside a tradie's vehicle (8)	Anagram of SLOB inside (A + UTE)
7 LOOPS	Turns bobbin around (5)	SPOOL reversed
8 DOME	Party men cut off head (4)	DO + (ME)n
9 SLOT CAR	Small racer's fate sealed by the result of serious damage (4,3)	LOT inside SCAR
13 REINVENTED	Brake, exposed to air, is replaced with an entirely new version (10)	REIN + VENTED
15 PIE	Dish that is served after starter of prawns (3)	IE after (P)rawns
16 PITA BREAD	Food bill grabbed by private investigator in connection with study (4,5)	TAB inside (PI + READ)
17 AS WELL AS	No less than a grand donated by a school (2,4,2)	A + SWELL + A + S
18 & 27-across AMBROSE EVENT	Observe men at revamped golf format (7,5)	Anagram of OBSERVE MAN AT
21 SADDLE	Micro-organisms in the end spoil meat (6)	microorganism(S) + ADDLE
22 CHEESE	Chef mostly accepting view about dairy product (6)	(CHE)f outside (SEE reversed)
24 RINGO	He played drums with part of string orchestra (5)	stRING Orchestra
25 EPIC	Grand hotel not used by the police implicated in corruption (4)	Anagram of THE POLICE minus HOTEL