

# AFR Cryptic (Christmas 2025) Solution

1	M	I	2	S	M	3	A	T	4	C	H		5	S	T	A	7	I	R	8	S		9	S	L	10	O	P	11	P	Y	
	A		L		U		U		12	W		R		N		C		T		S		A										
13	I	D	14	E	A	S		14	R	E	A	D	I	E	D		15	O	V	E	R	T	I	R	E		16	D				
	N		E		T		A		R		U		U		R		A		E		D		U									
17	S	U	P	E	18	R	S	T	A	R		18	M	I	S	C	E	L	L	A	N	E	O	U	S							
	T		E		A		O		A		P		T				E		T		N		T									
19	A	P	R	I	L		20	R	A	N	C	H	E	R		21	T	A	R	T	A	N										
	Y				I				T				I		O		S		T		22	R		23	S							
24	S	I	25	G	N	A	T	26	O	R	27	Y		27	S	H	A	L	E		28	L	I	N	E	U	P					
			O		N		D				E		L		N		29	H		O		L		H								
30	H	U	R	L	S		31	D	E	32	L	U	33	X	E		33	M	A	Y	O	N	N	A	I	S	E					
	I		G				I		E		Y		34	A		I	A						G		R							
35	T	R	E	S	36	P	A	S	S	E	D		37	A	38	M	B	L	E	R		38	V	O	I	C	E					
	M		O		R		H		W		39	S		E			S		I	O												
40	A	B	U	S	E	D			41	A	C	T	O	N		42	A	P	E	N	N	I	N	E		43	S					
	N		S		T		44	N		R		E			I					D												
				45	R	E	F	U	N	D		46	P	O	47	O	D	L	E	48	S		49	I	N	50	T	R	O			
51	D		52	H		N		M				H		L		M		I		C			R		U							
53	A	P	O	S	T	L	E	S	54	C	R	E	E	D		55	E	M	A	N	56	A	T	I	O	N						
	T		T		I		R		H		N		T		N		M		T		F		D									
56	E	L	A	B	O	R	A	T	E		57	S	W	I	F	T	I	E		58	I	D	59	L	E	R						
			I		U		C		S		O		M		S		S		O		E											
		59	D	R	E	S	S	Y		60	S	U	N	S	E	T		61	T	E	E	N	I	D	O	L						

Across	Clue	Explanation
1 MISMATCH	Clash is concealed by two males at church (8)	(IS inside M+M) + AT + CH
5 STAIRS	Celebrities taking one flight (6)	STARS outside I
9 SLOPPY	Careless spy seen hanging around dock (6)	SPY outside LOP
13 IDEAS	Nut products from capital of Alexandria in Roman times? (5)	(A)lexandria inside IDES
14 READIED	A sink painted in colour must be prepared (7)	(A + DIE) inside RED
15 OVERTIRED	Exhausted one tucked into open bottle of wine (9)	I inside (OVERT + RED)
17 SUPERSTAR	Damn agent, American, upset somebody (9)	(RATS + REP + US) reversed
18 MISCELLANEOUS	A solemn clue is reworked and varied (13)	Anagram of A SOLEMN CLUE IS
19 APRIL	Pair reunited before end of seasonal time of year (5)	Anagram of PAIR + seasona(L)
20 RANCHER	US stock manager looked after French department (7)	RAN + CHER

[illegible]

<b>Down</b>	<b>Clue</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1 MAINSTAYS	Chief supports one involved with employee visits (9)	I inside MAN + STAYS
2 SLEEPER	Support for tracks is being dropped off (7)	Double Definition
3 AUSTRALIANS	People of the Commonwealth should be upset at Asian slur (11)	Anagram of AT ASIAN SLUR
4 CURATOR	Hound a degenerate, retired superintendent (7)	CUR + A + (ROT reversed)
6 TRIUMPH	President embracing one heading for huge victory (7)	TRUMP outside I + (H)uge
7 INDUSTRIAL	Business in Denmark's capital linked to US lawsuit (10)	IN + (D)enmark + US + TRIAL
8 SCORE	Obtain illegal drugs from entrance to shopping centre? (5)	(S)hopping + CORE
9 STEALERS	They take livestock around a corral at the back (8)	STEERS outside [A + corra(L)]
10 OSTENTATION	Ring broadcaster about return of web show (11)	(O + STATION) outside (NET reversed)
11 PARDON	Sorry standard set by expert (6)	PAR + DON
12 WARRANTY	Assurance maintained by head of taxation in suspicious circumstances (8)	[RAN + (T)axation] inside WARY
16 DUST	Roger leaving messy drugstore clean (4)	Anagram of DRUGSTORE minus ROGER
21 TOENAIL	Note reviewed trouble with digital screen? (7)	Anagram of NOTE + AIL
22 RELIGION	Belief system left by one in* designated area (8)	(L + I) inside REGION
23 SPHERE	Special present - a ball (6)	SP + HERE
25 GORGEOUS	Beautiful unfenced house at the bottom of ravine? (8)	h)OUS(E after GORGE)
26 ODDISH	Gathering up food is a little bit strange (6)	DO reversed + DISH
27 SEXY	Seductive former lover living in the outskirts of Sydney? (4)	EX inside (S)ydne(Y)
29 HOARSE	Rider's companion stepped around a husky (6)	HORSE outside A
30 HIT MAN	Assassin may be greeting male dressed in brown (3,3)	HI + (M inside TAN)
32 LEEWARD	Pull fish up on the side away from the wind (7)	(DRAW + EEL) reversed
34 AMEN	Change abridged statement of affirmation (4)	AMEN(d)
36 PRETENTIOUS	Pompous goody-goody keeping on big top, say (11)	PIOUS outside (RE + TENT)
38 VINDICATION	Support V-sign? (11)	V + INDICATION
39 STEPHENSON	Rocket designer steps forward holding layer from battery (10)	(STEPS + ON) outside HEN

