PROJECT OVERVIEW:
In 2001 ADrail contracted Austrak to design and supply approximately two million standard gauge sleepers for this new 1420km single track railway. The sleepers had to be manufactured in 16 months. The railway was to be constructed in some of the most remote and inhospitable parts of Australia.

PRODUCT:
- new standard gauge sleeper were specially designed by Austrak using parameters provided by the client
- maximum 115kph, 23 tonne axle load, 2400mm long and 700mm spacing, 50kg rail
- Pandrol FastClip on 50kg rail in two variants; insulated and non-insulated
- turnout bearers (7 x 1:9 sets) were made at Austrak's Rockhampton factory

FACTORIES:
- rapid deployment of two new factories, specifically designed, constructed, commissioned and operated by Austrak for the project
- the location of the factories was strategically selected to shorten tracklaying supply train turnaround times to the head-of-rail enabling a significantly faster rate of tracklaying
- one factory at Katherine towards the northern end of the project, with six beds - production rate 2000 per day, commissioned February 2002, employed 50 people
- one factory at Tennant Creek towards the southern end of the project, with eight beds - production rate 2500 per day, commissioned January 2002, employed 60 people
- both operated six days a week 24 hours a day

BENEFITS:
The Alice Springs to Darwin railway line is one of the most exciting civil engineering projects to be undertaken in Australia. Work began on the AUD$1.3 billion project in May 2001 and was completed, five months ahead of schedule, in September 2003. This project is significant to Australia's rail infrastructure as it allows an efficient freight rail link within Australia linking the south-eastern states with the northernmost port in Darwin, providing a quicker route to rapidly expanding Asian markets.