A Survey on Robustness in Railway Planning

Planning problems in passenger railway range from long term strategic decision making to the detailed planning of operations. Operations research methods have played an increasing role in this planning process. However, recently more attention has been given to considerations of robustness in the quality of solutions to individual planning problems, and of operations in general. Robustness in general is the capacity for some system to absorb or resist changes. In the context of railway robustness it is often taken to be the capacity for operations to continue at some level when faced with a disruption such as delay or failure. This has resulted in more attention given to the inclusion of robustness measures and objectives in individual planning problems, and to the providing of tools to ensure operations continue under disrupted situations. In this paper we survey the literature on robustness in railway planning problems, considering how robustness is conceptualized and modelled for the individual problems of railway, the degree to which an overall railway robustness concept is present, and consider the future directions of robustness in railway planning.