

# A copositive approach for two-stage adjustable robust optimization with uncertain right-hand sides

Guanglin Xu<sup>1</sup>  · Samuel Burer<sup>1</sup>

Received: 20 May 2017 / Published online: 27 December 2017  
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2017

**Abstract** We study two-stage adjustable robust linear programming in which the right-hand sides are uncertain and belong to a convex, compact uncertainty set. This problem is NP-hard, and the affine policy is a popular, tractable approximation. We prove that under standard and simple conditions, the two-stage problem can be reformulated as a copositive optimization problem, which in turn leads to a class of tractable, semidefinite-based approximations that are at least as strong as the affine policy. We investigate several examples from the literature demonstrating that our tractable approximations significantly improve the affine policy. In particular, our approach solves exactly in polynomial time a class of instances of increasing size for which the affine policy admits an arbitrarily large gap.

**Keywords** Two-stage adjustable robust optimization · Robust optimization · Bilinear programming · Non-convex quadratic programming · Semidefinite programming · Copositive programming

## 1 Introduction

Ben-Tal et al. [9] introduced two-stage *adjustable robust optimization (ARO)*, which considers both first-stage (“here-and-now”) and second-stage (“wait-and-see”) variables. ARO can be significantly less conservative than regular robust optimization, and real-world applications of ARO abound: unit commitment in renewable energy

---

✉ Guanglin Xu  
guanglin-xu@uiowa.edu  
Samuel Burer  
samuel-burer@uiowa.edu

<sup>1</sup> Department of Management Sciences, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1994, USA

[14, 38, 41], facility location problems [2, 5, 25], emergency supply chain planning [7], and inventory management [6, 37]; see also [8, 24, 34]. We refer the reader to the excellent, recent tutorial [21] for background on ARO.

Since ARO is intractable in general [9], multiple tractable approximations have been proposed for it. In certain situations, a static, robust-optimization-based solution can be used to approximate ARO, and sometimes this static solution is optimal [10, 12]. The *affine policy* [9], which forces the second-stage variables to be an affine function of the uncertainty parameters, is another common approximation for ARO, but it is generally suboptimal. Several nonlinear policies have also been used to approximate ARO. Chen and Zhang [20] proposed the *extended affine policy* in which the primitive uncertainty set is reparameterized by introducing auxiliary variables after which the regular affine policy is applied. Bertsimas et al. [13] introduced a more accurate, yet more complicated, approximation which forces the second-stage variables to depend polynomially (with a user-specified, fixed degree) on the uncertain parameters. Their approach yields a hierarchy of Lasserre-type semidefinite approximations and can be extended to multi-stage robust optimization. Ardestani-Jaafari and Delage [4] studied a robust optimization problem featuring sums of piecewise linear functions, which is in fact a special case of ARO, and they proposed approximations based on mixed-integer linear programming and semidefinite programming.

The approaches just described provide upper bounds when ARO is stated as a minimization. On the other hand, a single lower bound can be calculated, for example, by fixing a specific value in the uncertainty set and solving the resulting LP (linear program), and Monte Carlo simulation over the uncertainty set can then be used to compute a best lower bound. Finally, global approaches for solving ARO exactly include column and constraint generation [40] and Benders decomposition [14, 22].

In this paper, we consider the following two-stage adjustable robust linear minimization problem with uncertain right-hand side:

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{RLP}}^* := & \min_{x, y(\cdot)} c^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} d^T y(u) \\ \text{s.t. } & Ax + By(u) \geq Fu \quad \forall u \in \mathcal{U} \\ & x \in \mathcal{X}, \end{aligned} \quad (\text{RLP})$$

where  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n_1}$ ,  $B \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n_2}$ ,  $c \in \mathbb{R}^{n_1}$ ,  $d \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2}$ ,  $F \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times k}$  and  $\mathcal{X} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^{n_1}$  is a closed convex set containing the first-stage decision  $x$ . The uncertainty set  $\mathcal{U} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k$  is compact, convex, and nonempty, and in particular we model it as a slice of a closed, convex, full-dimensional cone  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+ \times \mathbb{R}^{k-1}$ :

$$\mathcal{U} := \{u \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}} : e_1^T u = u_1 = 1\}, \quad (1)$$

where  $e_1$  is the first canonical basic vector in  $\mathbb{R}^k$ . In words,  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is the homogenization of  $\mathcal{U}$ . We choose this homogenized version for notational convenience and note that it allows the modeling of affine effects of the uncertain parameters. The second-stage variable is  $y(\cdot)$ , formally defined as a mapping  $y : \mathcal{U} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n_2}$ . It is well known, see [3, 28], that (RLP) is equivalent to

$$v_{\text{RLP}}^* = \min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} c^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} \min_{y(u) \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2}} \{d^T y(u) : By(u) \geq Fu - Ax\}, \quad (2)$$

where  $y(u)$  is a vector variable specifying the value of  $y(\cdot)$  at  $u$ .

Regarding (RLP), we make three standard assumptions.

**Assumption 1** The closed, convex set  $\mathcal{X}$  is computationally tractable, and the closed, convex cone  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is full-dimensional and computationally tractable.

For example,  $\mathcal{X}$  and  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  could be represented using a polynomial number of linear, second-order-cone, and semidefinite inequalities, each of which possesses a polynomial-time separation oracle [27].

**Assumption 2** Problem (RLP) is feasible, i.e., there exists a choice  $x \in \mathcal{X}$  and  $y(\cdot)$  such that  $Ax + By(u) \geq Fu$  for all  $u \in \mathcal{U}$ .

The existence of an affine policy, which can be checked in polynomial time, is sufficient to establish that Assumption 2 holds.

**Assumption 3** Problem (RLP) is bounded, i.e.,  $v_{\text{RLP}}^*$  is finite.

Note that the negative directions of recession  $\{\tau : d^T \tau < 0, B\tau \geq 0\}$  for the innermost LP in (2) do not depend on  $x$  and  $u$ . Hence, in light of Assumptions 2 and 3, there must exist no negative directions of recession; otherwise,  $v_{\text{RLP}}^*$  would clearly equal  $-\infty$ . So every innermost LP in (2) is either feasible with bounded value or infeasible. In particular, Assumption 2 implies that at least one such LP is feasible with bounded value. It follows that the specific associated dual LP  $\max\{(Fu - Ax)^T w : B^T w = d, w \geq 0\}$  is also feasible with bounded value. In particular, the fixed set

$$\mathcal{W} := \{w \geq 0 : B^T w = d\}$$

is nonempty. For this paper, we also make one additional assumption:

**Assumption 4** Problem (RLP) possesses relatively complete recourse, i.e., for all  $x \in \mathcal{X}$  and  $u \in \mathcal{U}$ , the innermost LP in (2) is feasible.

By the above discussion, Assumption 4 guarantees that the innermost LP is feasible with bounded value, and hence every dual  $\max\{(Fu - Ax)^T w : B^T w = d, w \geq 0\}$  attains its optimal value at an extreme point of  $\mathcal{W}$ .

In Sect. 2, under Assumptions 1–4, we reformulate (RLP) as an equivalent copositive program, which first and foremost enables a new perspective on two-stage robust optimization. Compared to most existing copositive approaches for difficult problems, ours exploits copositive duality; indeed, Assumption 4 is sufficient for establishing strong duality between the copositive primal and dual. In Sect. 3, we then apply a similar approach to derive a new formulation of the affine policy, which is then, in Sect. 4, directly related to the copositive version of (RLP). This establishes two extremes: on the one side is the copositive representation of (RLP), while on the other is the affine policy. Section 4 also proposes semidefinite-based approximations of (RLP) that interpolate between the full copositive program and the affine policy. Finally,

in Sect. 5, we investigate several examples from the literature that demonstrate our bounds can significantly improve the affine-policy value. In particular, we prove that our semidefinite approach solves a class of instances of increasing size for which the affine policy admits arbitrarily large gaps. We end the paper with a short discussion of future directions in Sect. 6.

It is important to note that, even if Assumption 4 does not hold, our copositive program still yields a valid upper bound on  $v_{\text{RLP}}^*$  that is at least as strong as the affine policy. More comments are provided at the end of Sect. 2; see also Sect. 3.

We mention three studies that are closely related to ours. Hanasusanto and Kuhn [29] propose copositive reformulations for two-stage distributionally robust linear programs over Wasserstein Balls. Although both our paper and theirs use copositive programming techniques, the two papers are quite different, e.g., our paper connects the copositive representation with the affine policy, and we present a class of examples that are solved exactly by our semidefinite approximations, while they directly resort to using a hierarchy of semidefinite programming to approximate the copositive programs. Chang et al. [19] consider a particular application of two-stage ARO in network design under uncertain demands and uncertain path failures; their primary problem does not contain explicit first-stage variables (although they do consider an extension which does). The authors use LP duality to reformulate their problem as a bilinear programming problem and subsequently approximate it via the standard, LP-based reformulation-linearization technique (RLT). They also show that their approximation improves the affine policy. In a similar vein, Ardestani-Jaafari and Delage [3] introduce an approach for (RLP) that applies LP duality, RLT-style and semidefinite valid inequalities, and semidefinite duality to obtain an approximation of (RLP). In comparison to [19] and [2], we use copositive duality to reformulate (RLP) exactly and then approximate it using semidefinite programming. Although all three approaches are closely related, we prefer our approach because it clearly separates the use of conic duality from the choice of approximation. We also feel that our derivation is relatively compact. In addition, both our paper and [3] consider a general uncertainty set but [3] focuses on a polyhedral  $\mathcal{U}$  from a practical point of view whereas our approach focuses on the class of uncertainty sets that can be represented, say, by linear, second-order-cone, and semidefinite inequalities.

## 1.1 Notation, terminology, and background

Let  $\mathbb{R}^n$  denote  $n$ -dimensional Euclidean space represented as column vectors, and let  $\mathbb{R}_+^n$  denote the nonnegative orthant in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ . For a scalar  $p \geq 1$ , the  $p$ -norm of  $v \in \mathbb{R}^n$  is defined  $\|v\|_p := (\sum_{i=1}^n |v_i|^p)^{1/p}$ , e.g.,  $\|v\|_1 = \sum_{i=1}^n |v_i|$ . We will drop the subscript for the 2-norm, i.e.,  $\|v\| := \|v\|_2$ . For  $v, w \in \mathbb{R}^n$ , the inner product of  $v$  and  $w$  is  $v^T w := \sum_{i=1}^n v_i w_i$ . The symbol  $\mathbf{1}_n$  denotes the all-ones vector in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .

The space  $\mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  denotes the set of real  $m \times n$  matrices, and the trace inner product of two matrices  $A, B \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  is  $A \bullet B := \text{trace}(A^T B)$ .  $S^n$  denotes the space of  $n \times n$  symmetric matrices, and for  $X \in S^n$ ,  $X \succeq 0$  means that  $X$  is positive semidefinite. In addition,  $\text{diag}(X)$  denotes the vector containing the diagonal entries of  $X$ , and  $\text{Diag}(v)$  is the diagonal matrix with vector  $v$  along its diagonal. We denote the null space of a

matrix  $A$  as  $\text{Null}(A)$ , i.e.,  $\text{Null}(A) := \{x : Ax = 0\}$ . For  $\mathcal{K} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  a closed, convex cone,  $\mathcal{K}^*$  denotes its dual cone and  $\text{int}(\mathcal{K})$  denotes its interior. For a matrix  $A$  with  $n$  columns, the inclusion  $\text{Rows}(A) \in \mathcal{K}$  indicates that the rows of  $A$ —considered as column vectors—are members of  $\mathcal{K}$ .

We next introduce some basics of *copositive programming* with respect to the cone  $\mathcal{K} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ . The *copositive cone* is defined as

$$\text{COP}(\mathcal{K}) := \{M \in \mathcal{S}^n : x^T M x \geq 0 \forall x \in \mathcal{K}\},$$

and its dual cone, the *completely positive cone*, is

$$\text{CPP}(\mathcal{K}) := \{X \in \mathcal{S}^n : X = \sum_i x^i (x^i)^T, x^i \in \mathcal{K}\},$$

where the summation over  $i$  is finite but its cardinality is unspecified. The term *copositive programming* refers to linear optimization over  $\text{COP}(\mathcal{K})$  or, via duality, linear optimization over  $\text{CPP}(\mathcal{K})$ . In fact, these problems are sometimes called *generalized copositive programming* or *set-semidefinite optimization* [18, 23] in contrast with the standard case  $\mathcal{K} = \mathbb{R}_+^n$ . In this paper, we work with generalized copositive programming, although we use the shorter phrase for convenience.

Finally, for the specific dimensions  $k$  and  $m$  of problem (RLP), we let  $e_i$  denote the  $i$ -th standard basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^k$ , and similarly,  $f_j$  denotes the  $j$ -th standard basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^m$ . We will also use  $g_1 := \begin{pmatrix} e_1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{k+m}$ .

## 2 A copositive reformulation

In this section, we construct a copositive representation of (RLP) under Assumptions 1–4 by first reformulating the inner maximization of (2) as a copositive problem and then employing copositive duality.

Within (2), define

$$\pi(x) := \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} \min_{y(u) \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2}} \{d^T y(u) : By(u) \geq Fu - Ax\}.$$

The dual of the inner minimization is  $\max_{w \in \mathcal{W}} (Fu - Ax)^T w$ , which is feasible as discussed in the Introduction. Hence, strong duality for LP implies

$$\pi(x) = \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} \max_w \{(Fu - Ax)^T w : w \in \mathcal{W}\} = \max_{(u, w) \in \mathcal{U} \times \mathcal{W}} (Fu - Ax)^T w, \quad (3)$$

In words,  $\pi(x)$  equals the optimal value of a bilinear program over convex constraints, which is NP-hard in general [30].

It holds also that  $\pi(x)$  equals the optimal value of an associated copositive program (see [15, 16] for example), which we now describe. Define

$$z := \begin{pmatrix} u \\ w \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{k+m}, \quad E := \begin{pmatrix} -de_1^T & B^T \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times (k+m)}, \quad (4)$$

where  $e_1 \in \mathbb{R}^k$  is the first coordinate vector, and homogenize via the relationship (1) and the definition of  $\mathcal{W}$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \pi(x) = \max \quad & (F - A x e_1^T) \bullet w u^T \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & E z = 0 \\ & z \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m, \quad g_1^T z = 1, \end{aligned}$$

where  $g_1$  is the first coordinate vector in  $\mathbb{R}^{k+m}$ . The copositive representation is thus

$$\begin{aligned} \pi(x) = \max \quad & (F - A x e_1^T) \bullet Z_{21} \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \text{diag}(E Z E^T) = 0 \\ & Z \in \text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \quad g_1 g_1^T \bullet Z = 1, \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

where  $Z$  has the block structure

$$Z = \begin{pmatrix} Z_{11} & Z_{21}^T \\ Z_{21} & Z_{22} \end{pmatrix} \in \mathcal{S}^{k+m}.$$

Note that under positive semidefiniteness, which is implied by the completely positive constraint, the constraint  $\text{diag}(E Z E^T) = 0$  is equivalent to  $Z E^T = 0$ ; see proposition 1 of [16], for example. For the majority of this paper, we will focus on this second version:

$$\begin{aligned} \pi(x) = \max \quad & (F - A x e_1^T) \bullet Z_{21} \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & Z E^T = 0 \\ & Z \in \text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \quad g_1 g_1^T \bullet Z = 1. \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

By standard theory [35, corollary 3.2d], the extreme points of  $\mathcal{W}$  are contained in a ball  $w^T w \leq r_w$ , where  $r_w > 0$  is a radius that is polynomially computable and representable in the encoding length of the entries of  $B$  and  $d$  (assuming those entries are rational). Hence, Assumption 4 guarantees that the optimal value of  $\max\{(F u - A x)^T w : B^T w = d, w \geq 0\}$  does not change when  $w^T w \leq r_w$  is enforced. In addition, because  $\mathcal{U}$  is bounded by Assumption 1, there exists a sufficiently large scalar  $r_z > 0$  such that the constraint  $z^T z \leq r_z$  is redundant. It follows from these observations that, in the preceding argument, we can enforce  $z^T z = u^T u + w^T w \leq r := r_z + r_w$  without cutting off all optimal solutions of (3). Thus, the lifted and linearized constraint  $I \bullet Z \leq r$  can be added to (6) without changing its optimal value, although some feasible directions of recession may be cut off. We arrive at

$$\begin{aligned} \pi(x) = \max \quad & (F - A x e_1^T) \bullet Z_{21} \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & Z E^T = 0, \quad I \bullet Z \leq r \\ & Z \in \text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \quad g_1 g_1^T \bullet Z = 1. \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

We remark that the procedure of bounding the vertices of  $\mathcal{W}$  is similar in spirit to the scheme proposed in Proposition 6 of [3].

Letting  $\Lambda \in \mathbb{R}^{(k+m) \times n_2}$ ,  $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$ , and  $\rho \in \mathbb{R}$  be the respective dual multipliers of  $ZE^T = 0$ ,  $g_1 g_1^T \bullet Z = 1$ , and  $I \bullet Z \leq r$ , standard conic duality theory implies the dual of (7) is

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\lambda, \Lambda, \rho} \quad & \lambda + r\rho \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2}G(x) + \frac{1}{2}(E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E) + \rho I \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \\ & \rho \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

where

$$G(x) := \begin{pmatrix} 0 & (F - A x e_1^T)^T \\ F - A x e_1^T & 0 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathcal{S}^{k+m}$$

is affine in  $x$ . Holding all other dual variables fixed, for  $\rho > 0$  large, the matrix variable in (8) is strictly copositive—in fact, positive definite—which establishes that Slater's condition is satisfied, thus ensuring strong duality:

**Proposition 1** *Under Assumption 4, suppose  $r > 0$  is a constant such that  $z^T z \leq r$  is satisfied by all  $u \in \mathcal{U}$  and all extreme points  $w \in \mathcal{W}$ , where  $z = (u, w)$ . Then the optimal value of (8) equals  $\pi(x)$ .*

Now, with  $\pi(x)$  expressed as a minimization that depends affinely on  $x$ , we can collapse (2) into a single minimization that is equivalent to (RLP):

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x, \lambda, \Lambda, \rho} \quad & c^T x + \lambda + r\rho \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & x \in \mathcal{X}, \quad \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2}G(x) + \frac{1}{2}(E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E) + \rho I \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \\ & \rho \geq 0. \end{aligned} \quad (\overline{\text{RLP}})$$

**Theorem 1** *The optimal value of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  equals  $v_{\text{RLP}}^*$ .*

An equivalent version of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  can be derived based on the representation of  $\pi(x)$  in (5):

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x, \lambda, v, \rho} \quad & c^T x + \lambda + r\rho \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & x \in \mathcal{X}, \quad \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2}G(x) + E^T \text{Diag}(v)E + \rho I \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \\ & \rho \geq 0. \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

Our example in Sect. 5.1 will be based on this version.

We remark that, even if Assumption 4 fails and strong duality between (7) and (8) cannot be established, it still holds that the optimal value of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  is an upper bound on  $v_{\text{RLP}}^*$ . Note that, in this case, (7) should be modified to exclude  $I \bullet Z \leq r$ , and  $\rho$  should be set to 0 in (8).

### 3 The affine policy

Under the affine policy, the second-stage decision variable  $y(\cdot)$  in (RLP) is modeled as a linear function of  $u$  via a free variable  $Y \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times k}$ :

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{Aff}}^* := & \min_{x, y(\cdot), Y} c^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} d^T y(u) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & Ax + By(u) \geq Fu \quad \forall u \in \mathcal{U} \\ & y(u) = Yu \quad \forall u \in \mathcal{U} \\ & x \in \mathcal{X}. \end{aligned} \quad (\text{Aff})$$

Here,  $Y$  acts as a “dummy” first-stage decision, and so (Aff) can be recast as a regular robust optimization problem over  $\mathcal{U}$ . Specifically, using standard techniques [9], (Aff) is equivalent to

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x, Y, \lambda} \quad & c^T x + \lambda \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \lambda e_1 - Y^T d \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^* \\ & \text{Rows}(Axe_1^T - F + BY) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^* \\ & x \in \mathcal{X}. \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

Problem (10) is tractable, but in general, the affine policy is only an approximation of (RLP), i.e.,  $v_{\text{RLP}}^* < v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ . In what follows, we provide a copositive representation  $(\overline{\text{Aff}})$  of (Aff), which is then used to develop an alternative formulation (IA) of (10). Later, in Sect. 4, problem (IA) will be compared directly to  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$ .

Following the approach of Sect. 2, we may express (Aff) as  $\min_{x \in \mathcal{X}, Y} c^T x + \Pi(x, Y)$  where

$$\Pi(x, Y) := \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} \min_{y(u) \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2}} \{d^T y(u) : By(u) \geq Fu - Ax, y(u) = Yu\}.$$

Note that we do not replace  $y(u)$  everywhere by  $Yu$  in the definition of  $\Pi(x, Y)$ ; this is a small but critical detail in the subsequent derivations. The inner minimization has dual

$$\begin{aligned} & \max_{w \geq 0, v} \{(Fu - Ax)^T w + (Yu)^T v : B^T w + v = d\} \\ & = \max_{w \geq 0} \left( (Fu - Ax)^T w + (Yu)^T (d - B^T w) \right). \end{aligned}$$

After collecting terms, homogenizing, and converting to copositive optimization, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \Pi(x, Y) = \quad & \max \quad \frac{1}{2}(G(x) - H(Y)) \bullet Z \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & Z \in \text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \quad \text{sig}_1^T \bullet Z = 1 \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$



with dual

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\lambda} \quad & \lambda \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2} G(x) + \frac{1}{2} H(Y) \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

where  $G(x)$  is defined as in Sect. 2 and

$$H(Y) := \begin{pmatrix} -e_1 d^T Y - Y^T d e_1^T & (BY)^T \\ BY & 0 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathcal{S}^{k+m}.$$

Since  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is full-dimensional by Assumption 1,  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m$  is full-dimensional as well. Thus, it contains a closed ball of full dimension. Furthermore, since  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m$  is also a closed cone, it contains a full-dimensional second-order cone, denoted by  $\mathcal{L}$ . Hence,  $\text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  contains all matrices, which are completely positive with respect to  $\mathcal{L}$ . It is clear that taking  $\hat{z} \in \text{int}(\mathcal{L})$  and then the matrix  $\hat{z}\hat{z}^T$  is an interior point of the completely positive cone with respect to  $\mathcal{L}$ , and thus an interior point of  $\text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ . Hence, Slater's condition holds in (11), implying strong duality between (11) and (12). Thus, repeating the logic of Sect. 2, (Aff) is equivalent to

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x, \lambda, Y} \quad & c^T x + \lambda \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & x \in \mathcal{X}, \quad \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2} G(x) + \frac{1}{2} H(Y) \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m). \end{aligned} \quad (\overline{\text{Aff}})$$

**Proposition 2** *The optimal value of  $(\overline{\text{Aff}})$  is  $v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ .*

We now show that  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  in  $(\overline{\text{Aff}})$  can be replaced by a particular inner approximation without changing the optimal value. Moreover, this inner approximation is tractable, so that the resulting optimization problem serves as an alternative to the formulation (10) of  $(\overline{\text{Aff}})$ .

Using the mnemonic “IA” for “inner approximation,” we define

$$\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) := \left\{ S = \begin{pmatrix} S_{11} & S_{21}^T \\ S_{21} & S_{22} \end{pmatrix} : S_{11} = e_1 \alpha^T + \alpha e_1^T, \alpha \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*, S_{22} \geq 0 \right\}.$$

This set is tractable because it is defined by affine constraints in  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*$  as well as non-negativity constraints. Moreover,  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  is indeed a subset of  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ :

**Lemma 1**  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \subseteq \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ .

*Proof* We first note that (1) implies that the first coordinate of every element of  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is nonnegative; hence,  $e_1 \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*$ . Now, for arbitrary  $\begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m$  and  $S \in \text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ , we prove  $t := \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix}^T S \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} \geq 0$ . We have

$$t = \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix}^T \begin{pmatrix} S_{11} & S_{21}^T \\ S_{21} & S_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} = p^T S_{11} p + 2 q^T S_{21} p + q^T S_{22} q.$$

Analyzing each of the three summands separately, we first have

$$e_1, \alpha \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^* \implies p^T S_{11} p = p^T (e_1 \alpha^T + \alpha e_1^T) p = 2(p^T e_1)(\alpha^T p) \geq 0.$$

Second,  $p \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  and  $\text{Rows}(S_{21}) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*$  imply  $S_{21} p \geq 0$ , which in turn implies  $q^T S_{21} p = q^T (S_{21} p) \geq 0$  because  $q \geq 0$ . Finally, it is clear that  $q^T S_{22} q \geq 0$  as  $S_{22} \geq 0$  and  $q \geq 0$ . Thus,  $t \geq 0 + 0 + 0 = 0$ , as desired.  $\square$

The following tightening of  $(\overline{\text{Aff}})$  simply replaces  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  with its inner approximation  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IA}}^* &:= \min_{x, \lambda, Y} c^T x + \lambda \\ \text{s.t. } &x \in \mathcal{X}, \quad \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2} G(x) + \frac{1}{2} H(Y) \in \text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m). \end{aligned} \quad (\text{IA})$$

By construction,  $v_{\text{IA}}^* \geq v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ , but in fact these values are equal.

**Theorem 2**  $v_{\text{IA}}^* = v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ .

*Proof* We show  $v_{\text{IA}}^* \leq v_{\text{Aff}}^*$  by demonstrating that every feasible solution of (10) yields a feasible solution of (IA) with the same objective value. Let  $(x, Y, \lambda)$  be feasible for (10); we prove

$$S := \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2} G(x) + \frac{1}{2} H(Y) \in \text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m),$$

which suffices. Note that the block form of  $S$  is

$$S = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{2} (e_1 d^T Y + Y^T d e_1^T) & \frac{1}{2} (A x e_1^T - F + B Y)^T \\ \frac{1}{2} (A x e_1^T - F + B Y) & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The argument decomposes into three pieces. First, we define  $\alpha := \frac{1}{2}(\lambda e_1 - Y^T d)$ , which satisfies  $\alpha \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*$  due to (10). Then

$$\begin{aligned} S_{11} &= \lambda e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{2} (e_1 d^T Y + Y^T d e_1^T) \\ &= \left( \frac{1}{2} \lambda e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{2} e_1 d^T Y \right) + \left( \frac{1}{2} \lambda e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{2} Y^T d e_1^T \right) \\ &= e_1 \alpha^T + \alpha e_1^T \end{aligned}$$

as desired. Second, we have  $2 \text{Rows}(S_{21}) = \text{Rows}(A x e_1^T - F + B Y) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}^*$  by (10). Finally,  $S_{22} = 0 \geq 0$ .  $\square$

## 4 Improving the affine policy

A direct relationship holds between  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  and (IA):

**Proposition 3** In problem  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$ , write  $\Lambda = \begin{pmatrix} \Lambda_1 \\ \Lambda_2 \end{pmatrix}$ , where  $\Lambda_1 \in \mathbb{R}^{k \times n_2}$  and  $\Lambda_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n_2}$ . Problem (IA) is a restriction of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  in which  $\Lambda_2 = 0$ ,  $Y$  is identified with  $\Lambda_1^T$ ,  $\rho = 0$ , and  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  is tightened to  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ .

*Proof* Examining the similar structure of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  and (IA), it suffices to equate the terms  $E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E$  and  $H(Y)$  in the respective problems under the stated restrictions. From (4),

$$E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E = \begin{pmatrix} -e_1 d^T \Lambda_1^T - \Lambda_1 d e_1^T & \Lambda_1 B^T - e_1 d^T \Lambda_2^T \\ B \Lambda_1^T - \Lambda_2 d e_1^T & B \Lambda_2^T + \Lambda_2 B^T \end{pmatrix}.$$

Setting  $\Lambda_2 = 0$  and identifying  $Y = \Lambda_1^T$ , we see

$$E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E = \begin{pmatrix} -e_1 d^T Y - Y^T d e_1^T & Y^T B^T \\ B Y & 0 \end{pmatrix} = H(Y),$$

as desired.  $\square$

Now let  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  be any closed convex cone satisfying

$$\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \subseteq \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \subseteq \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m),$$

where the mnemonic “IB” stands for “in between”, and consider the following problem gotten by replacing  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  in  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$  with  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IB}}^* &:= \min_{x, \lambda, \Lambda} c^T x + \lambda \\ \text{s.t. } & x \in \mathcal{X}, \quad \lambda g_1 g_1^T - \frac{1}{2} G(x) + \frac{1}{2} (E^T \Lambda^T + \Lambda E) \in \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m). \end{aligned} \quad (\text{IB})$$

Problem (IB) is clearly a restriction of  $(\overline{\text{RLP}})$ , and by Proposition 3, it is simultaneously no tighter than (IA). Combining this with Theorems 1 and 2, we thus have:

**Theorem 3**  $v_{\text{RLP}}^* \leq v_{\text{IB}}^* \leq v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ .

We end this section with a short discussion of example approximations  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  for typical cases of  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$ . In fact, there are complete hierarchies of approximations of  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  [42], but we present a relatively simple construction that starts from a given inner approximation  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$  of  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$ :

**Proposition 4** Suppose  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}) \subseteq \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$ , and define

$$\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) := \left\{ S + M + R : \begin{array}{l} S \in \text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m), \quad M \succeq 0 \\ R_{11} \in \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}), \quad R_{21} = 0, \quad R_{22} = 0 \end{array} \right\}.$$

Then  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \subseteq \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m) \subseteq \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ .

*Proof* For the first inclusion, simply take  $M = 0$  and  $R_{11} = 0$ . For the second inclusion, let arbitrary  $\begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m$  be given. We need to show

$$\begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix}^T (S + M + R) \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix}^T S \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix}^T M \begin{pmatrix} p \\ q \end{pmatrix} + p^T R_{11} p \geq 0.$$

The first term is nonnegative because  $S \in \text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ ; the second term is nonnegative because  $M \succeq 0$ ; and the third is nonnegative because  $R_{11} \in \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$ .  $\square$

*Remark 1* The cone  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  can also be seen as the dual cone of a relaxation of  $\text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ —a relaxation that enforces various types of valid inequalities such as semidefiniteness, RLT-type constraints [1, 17, 36] that are derived from the interaction of  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  and  $\mathbb{R}_+^m$ , as well as constraints coming from the dual cone of  $\text{IA}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ .

When  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}} = \{u \in \mathbb{R}^k : \|(u_2, \dots, u_k)^T\| \leq u_1\}$  is the second-order cone, it is known, by S-Lemma [33], that

$$\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}) = \{R_{11} = \tau J + M_{11} : \tau \geq 0, M_{11} \succeq 0\},$$

where  $J = \text{Diag}(1, -1, \dots, -1)$ . Because of this simple structure, it often makes sense to take  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}) = \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$  in practice. Note also that  $M_{11} \succeq 0$  can be absorbed into  $M \succeq 0$  in the definition of  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  above. When  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}} = \{u \in \mathbb{R}^k : Pu \geq 0\}$  is a polyhedral cone based on some matrix  $P$ , a typical inner approximation of  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}})$  is

$$\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}) := \{R_{11} = P^T N P : N \succeq 0\},$$

where  $N$  is a symmetric matrix variable of appropriate size. This corresponds to the RLT approach of [1, 17, 36].

## 5 Examples

In this section, we demonstrate our approximation  $v_{\text{IB}}^*$  satisfying  $v_{\text{RLP}}^* \leq v_{\text{IB}}^* \leq v_{\text{Aff}}^*$  on several examples from the literature. The first example is treated analytically, while the remaining examples are verified numerically. All computations are conducted with Mosek version 8.0.0.28 beta [32] on an Intel Core i3 2.93 GHz Windows computer with 4GB of RAM and implemented using the modeling language YALMIP [31] in MATLAB (R2014a).

### 5.1 A temporal network example

The paper [39] studies a so-called *temporal network* application, which for any integer  $s \geq 2$  leads to the problem (13) below. The uncertainty set is  $\Xi \subseteq \mathbb{R}^s$ ; the first-stage decision  $x$  is fixed, say, at 0; and  $y(\cdot)$  maps into  $\mathbb{R}^s$ :

$$\begin{aligned}
& \min_{y(\cdot)} \max_{\xi \in \Xi} y(\xi)_s \\
& \text{s.t. } y(\xi)_1 \geq \max\{\xi_1, 1 - \xi_1\} \quad \forall \xi \in \Xi \\
& \quad y(\xi)_2 \geq \max\{\xi_2, 1 - \xi_2\} + y(\xi)_1 \quad \forall \xi \in \Xi \\
& \quad \vdots \\
& \quad y(\xi)_s \geq \max\{\xi_s, 1 - \xi_s\} + y(\xi)_{s-1} \quad \forall \xi \in \Xi.
\end{aligned} \tag{13}$$

Note that each of the above linear constraints can be expressed as two separate linear constraints. The authors of [39] consider a polyhedral uncertainty set (based on the 1-norm). A related paper [28] considers a conic uncertainty set (based on the 2-norm) for  $s = 2$ ; we will extend this to  $s \geq 2$ . In particular, we consider the following two uncertainty sets for general  $s$ :

$$\begin{aligned}
\Xi_1 &:= \{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^s : \|\xi - \frac{1}{2}\mathbb{1}_s\|_1 \leq \frac{1}{2}\}, \\
\Xi_2 &:= \{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^s : \|\xi - \frac{1}{2}\mathbb{1}_s\| \leq \frac{1}{2}\},
\end{aligned}$$

where  $\mathbb{1}_s$  denotes the all-ones vector in  $\mathbb{R}^s$ . For  $j = 1, 2$ , let  $v_{\text{RLP},j}^*$  and  $v_{\text{Aff},j}^*$  be the robust and affine values associated with (13) for the uncertainty set  $\Xi_j$ . Note that  $\Xi_1 \subseteq \Xi_2$ , and hence  $v_{\text{RLP},1}^* \leq v_{\text{RLP},2}^*$ . The papers [28, 39] show that  $v_{\text{Aff},1}^* = v_{\text{Aff},2}^* = s$ , and [39] establishes  $v_{\text{RLP},1}^* = \frac{1}{2}(s + 1)$ . Moreover, we prove the following result in the Appendix:

**Lemma 2**  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ .

Overall, we see that each  $j = 1, 2$  yields a class of problems with arbitrarily large gaps between the true robust adjustable and affine-policy values.

Using the change of variables

$$u := (1, u_2, \dots, u_{s+1})^T = (1, 2\xi_1 - 1, \dots, 2\xi_s - 1)^T \in \mathbb{R}^{s+1},$$

for each  $\Xi_j$ , we may cast (13) in the form of (RLP) by setting  $x = 0$ , defining

$$m = 2s, \quad k = s + 1, \quad n_2 = s,$$

and taking  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_j$  to be the  $k$ -dimensional cone associated with the  $j$ -norm. For convenience, we continue to use  $s$  in the following discussion, but we will remind the reader of the relationships between  $s$ ,  $m$ ,  $k$ , and  $n_2$  as necessary (e.g.,  $s = m/2$ ). We also set

$$d = (0, \dots, 0, 1)^T \in \mathbb{R}^s,$$

$$B = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{2s \times s},$$

$$F = \frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & -1 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & -1 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{2s \times (s+1)}.$$

Furthermore,

$$\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 := \{u \in \mathbb{R}^{s+1} : \|(u_2, \dots, u_{s+1})^T\| \leq u_1\}$$

is the second-order cone, and

$$\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 := \{u \in \mathbb{R}^{s+1} : Pu \geq 0\},$$

where each row of  $P \in \mathbb{R}^{2s \times (s+1)}$  has the following form:  $(1, \pm 1, \dots, \pm 1)$ . That is, each row is an  $(s+1)$ -length vector with a 1 in its first position and some combination of  $+1$ 's and  $-1$ 's in the remaining  $s$  positions. Note that the size of  $P$  is exponential in  $s$ . Using extra nonnegative variables, we could also represent  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1$  as the projection of a cone with size polynomial in  $s$ , and all of the subsequent discussion would still apply. In other words, the exact representation of  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1$  is not so relevant to our discussion here; we choose the representation  $Pu \geq 0$  in the original space of variables for convenience.

It is important to note that, besides  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1$  and  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$ , all other data required for representing (13) in the form of (RLP), such as the matrices  $B$  and  $F$ , do not depend on  $j$ . Assumptions 1–3 clearly hold, and the following proposition shows that (13) also satisfies Assumption 4:

**Proposition 5** *For (13) and its formulation as an instance of (RLP),  $\mathcal{W}$  is nonempty and bounded.*

*Proof* The system  $B^T w = d$  is equivalent to the  $2s - 1$  equations  $w_1 + w_2 = 1$ ,  $w_2 + w_3 = 1, \dots, w_{2s-1} + w_{2s} = 1$ . It is thus straightforward to check that  $\mathcal{W}$  is nonempty and bounded.  $\square$

### 5.1.1 The case $j = 2$

Let us focus on the case  $j = 2$ ; we continue to make use of the subscript 2. Recall  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ , and consider problem (IB<sub>2</sub>) with  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  built as described for the second-order cone at the end of Sect. 4. We employ the equivalent formulation (9) of (RLP), setting  $x = 0$  and replacing  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  by  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$ :

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IB},2}^* &= \min \lambda + r\rho \\ \text{s.t. } & \lambda g_1^T - \frac{1}{2}G(0) + E^T \text{Diag}(v)E + \rho I \in \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s}) \\ & \rho \geq 0. \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

Note that the dimension of  $g_1$  is  $k + m = (s + 1) + 2s = 3s + 1$ .

Substituting the definition of  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  from Sect. 4, using the fact that  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2^* = \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$ , and simplifying, we have

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IB},2}^* &= \min \lambda + r\rho \\ \text{s.t. } & \rho I + \lambda g_1^T - \frac{1}{2}G(0) + E^T \text{Diag}(v)E - S - R \geq 0 \\ & \rho \geq 0, \quad S_{11} = e_1 \alpha^T + \alpha e_1^T, \quad \alpha \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2, \quad S_{22} \geq 0, \quad \text{Rows}(S_{21}) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \\ & R_{11} = \tau J, \quad \tau \geq 0, \quad R_{21} = 0, \quad R_{22} = 0. \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

**Proposition 6** For any  $\rho > 0$ , (15) has a feasible solution with objective value  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* + r\rho$ .

*Proof* See the Appendix.  $\square$

**Theorem 4**  $v_{\text{IB},2}^* = v_{\text{RLP},2}^*$ .

*Proof* We know  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* \leq v_{\text{IB},2}^*$  by Theorem 3. Moreover we have  $v_{\text{IB},2}^* \leq v_{\text{RLP},2}^* + r\rho$  for any  $\rho > 0$  by Proposition 6. Thus, by letting  $\rho \rightarrow 0$ , we have  $v_{\text{IB},2}^* \leq v_{\text{RLP},2}^*$ , which completes the proof.  $\square$

For completeness—and also to facilitate Sect. 5.1.2 next—we construct the corresponding optimal solution of the dual of (14), which can be derived from (5) by setting  $x = 0$ , adding the redundant constraint  $I \bullet Z \leq r$ , and replacing  $\text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  by its relaxation  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})^*$ , the dual cone of  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$ . Specifically, the dual is

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IB},2}^* &= \max F \bullet Z_{21} \\ \text{s.t. } & \text{diag}(EZE^T) = 0, \quad I \bullet Z \leq r \\ & J \bullet Z_{11} \geq 0, \quad Z_{11}e_1 \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2, \quad Z_{22} \geq 0, \quad \text{Rows}(Z_{21}) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \\ & Z \succeq 0, \quad g_1^T \bullet Z = 1. \end{aligned} \quad (16)$$

In particular, we construct the optimal solution of (16) in the following proposition:

**Proposition 7** *Define*

$$Z = \frac{1}{4} \left[ \begin{pmatrix} 2e_1 \\ \mathbb{1}_m \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 2e_1 \\ \mathbb{1}_m \end{pmatrix}^T + \sum_{i=1}^s \begin{pmatrix} \frac{2}{\sqrt{s}} e_{i+1} \\ f_{2i-1} - f_{2i} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \frac{2}{\sqrt{s}} e_{i+1} \\ f_{2i-1} - f_{2i} \end{pmatrix}^T \right],$$

where each  $e_\bullet$  is a canonical basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^k = \mathbb{R}^{s+1}$ , each  $f_\bullet$  is a canonical basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^m = \mathbb{R}^{2s}$ , and  $\mathbb{1}_m \in \mathbb{R}^m$  is the all-ones vector. Then,  $Z$  is the optimal solution of (16).

*Proof* See the Appendix.  $\square$

### 5.1.2 The case $j = 1$

Recall that  $\Xi_1$  is properly contained in  $\Xi_2$ . So  $v_{\text{RLP},1}^*$  cannot exceed  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^*$  due to its smaller uncertainty set. In fact, as discussed above, we have  $\frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + 1) = v_{\text{RLP},1}^* < v_{\text{RLP},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$  and  $v_{\text{Aff},1}^* = v_{\text{Aff},2}^* = s$ . In this subsection, we further exploit the inclusion  $\Xi_1 \subseteq \Xi_2$  and the results of the previous subsection (case  $j = 2$ ) to prove that, for the particular tightening  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  proposed at the end of Sect. 4, we have  $v_{\text{RLP},1}^* < v_{\text{IB},1}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s) < v_{\text{Aff},1}^*$ . In other words, the case  $j = 1$  provides an example in which our approach improves the affine value but does not completely close the gap with the robust value. Our main result of this case is given in the following proposition.

**Proposition 8**  $v_{\text{IB},1}^* = v_{\text{IB},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ .

*Proof* See the Appendix.  $\square$

## 5.2 Multi-item newsvendor problem

In this example, we consider the same robust multi-item newsvendor problem discussed in [3]:

$$\max_{x \geq 0} \min_{\xi \in \Xi} \sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}} [r_j \min(x_j, \xi_j) - c_j x_j + s_j \max(x_j - \xi_j, 0) - p_j \max(\xi_j - x_j, 0)], \quad (17)$$

where  $\mathcal{J}$  represents the set of products;  $x$  is the vector of nonnegative order quantities  $x_j$  for all  $j \in \mathcal{J}$ ;  $\xi \in \Xi$  is the vector of uncertain demands  $\xi_j$  for all  $j \in \mathcal{J}$ ;  $r_j, c_j, s_j$ , and  $p_j$  denote the sale price, order cost, salvage price, and shortage cost of a unit of product  $j$  with  $s_j \leq \min(r_j, c_j)$ . Problem (17) is equivalent to

$$\begin{aligned} & \max_{x, y(\cdot)} \min_{\xi \in \Xi} \sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}} y_j(\xi) \\ \text{s.t. } & y_j(\xi) \leq (r_j - c_j)x_j - (r_j - s_j)(x_j - \xi_j) \quad \forall j \in \mathcal{J}, \xi \in \Xi \\ & y_j(\xi) \leq (r_j - c_j)x_j - p_j(\xi_j - x_j) \quad \forall j \in \mathcal{J}, \xi \in \Xi \\ & x \geq 0. \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$



We consider the same instance as in [3] with  $\mathcal{J} = \{1, 2, 3\}$ ,

$$r = (80, 80, 80), \quad c = (70, 50, 20), \quad s = (20, 15, 10), \quad p = (60, 60, 50),$$

and

$$\Xi := \left\{ \xi : \exists \zeta^+, \zeta^- \text{ s.t. } \begin{array}{l} \zeta^+ \geq 0, \zeta^- \geq 0 \\ \zeta_j^+ + \zeta_j^- \leq 1 \quad \forall j \in \mathcal{J} \\ \sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}} (\zeta_j^+ + \zeta_j^-) = 2 \\ \xi_1 = 80 + 30(\zeta_1^+ + \zeta_2^+ - \zeta_1^- - \zeta_2^-) \\ \xi_2 = 80 + 30(\zeta_2^+ + \zeta_3^+ - \zeta_2^- - \zeta_3^-) \\ \xi_3 = 60 + 20(\zeta_3^+ + \zeta_1^+ - \zeta_3^- - \zeta_1^-) \end{array} \right\}.$$

Omitting the details, we reformulate problem (18) as an instance of (RLP) in minimization form. Assumption 1 clearly holds, and by using a method called *enumeration of robust linear constraints* in [26], we have  $v_{\text{RLP}}^* = -825.83$  (so Assumption 3 holds). Moreover, the affine-policy value is  $v_{\text{Aff}}^* = -41.83$ , and thus Assumption 2 holds. As mentioned at the end of Sect. 2, whether or not Assumption 4 holds, in practice our approach still provides an upper bound. Indeed, we solve (IB) with the approximating cone  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  defined in Sect. 4, where  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is a polyhedral cone, and obtain  $v_{\text{IB}}^* = -411.08$ , which closes the gap significantly. The first-stage decisions given by the affine policy and our approach, respectively, are

$$x_{\text{Aff}}^* \approx (52.083, 104.400, 80.000), \quad x_{\text{IB}}^* \approx (57.118, 78.162, 77.473).$$

For the same instance, the paper [3] reports the same upper bound. Indeed, it appears that the specification of our cone  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  corresponds directly to the classes of valid inequalities that they include in their approach [3], but we have not proved this formally.

### 5.3 Lot-sizing problem on a network

We next consider a network lot-sizing problem derived from Sect. 5 of [11] for which the mathematical formulation is:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \min_{x, y(\cdot)} & c^T x + \max_{\xi \in \Xi} \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N t_{ij} y(\xi)_{ij} \\ \text{s.t.} & x_i + \sum_{j=1}^N y(\xi)_{ji} - \sum_{j=1}^N y(\xi)_{ij} \geq \xi_i \quad \forall \xi \in \Xi, \quad i = 1, \dots, N \\ & y(\xi)_{ij} \geq 0 \quad \forall \xi \in \Xi, \quad i, j = 1, \dots, N \\ & 0 \leq x_i \leq V_i \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, N, \end{array}$$

where  $N$  is the number of locations in the network,  $x$  denotes the first-stage stock allocations,  $y(\xi)_{ij}$  denotes the second-stage shipping amounts from location  $i$  to location  $j$ , and the uncertainty set is the ball  $\Xi := \{\xi : \|\xi\| \leq \Gamma\}$  for a given radius  $\Gamma$ .

**Table 1** Unit transportation costs  $t_{ij}$  associated with pairs of locations

Location $j$	Location $i$							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	0	4	3	2	2	2	3	5
2	4	0	6	5	4	4	2	8
3	3	6	0	1	5	2	6	2
4	2	5	1	0	4	1	4	3
5	2	4	5	4	0	4	2	7
6	2	4	2	1	4	0	4	4
7	3	2	6	4	2	4	0	7
8	5	8	2	3	7	4	7	0

(The paper [11] uses a polyhedral uncertainty set, which we will also discuss below.) The vector  $c$  consists of the first-stage costs, the  $t_{ij}$  are the second-stage transportation costs for all location pairs, and  $V_i$  represents the capacity of store location  $i$ . We refer the reader to [11] for a full description.

Consistent with [11], we consider an instance with  $N = 8$ ,  $\Gamma = 10\sqrt{N}$ , each  $V_i = 20$ , and each  $c_i = 20$ . We randomly generate the positions of the  $N$  locations from  $[0, 10]^2$  in the plane. Then we set  $t_{ij}$  to be the (rounded) Euclidean distances between all pairs of locations; see Table 1.

Omitting the details, we reformulate this problem as an instance of (RLP), and we calculate  $v_{\text{LB}}^* = 1573.8$  (using the Monte Carlo sampling procedure mentioned in the Introduction) and  $v_{\text{Aff}}^* = 1950.8$ . It is also easy to see that Assumption 1 holds, and the existence of an affine policy implies that Assumption 2 holds. Moreover, Assumption 3 holds because the original objective value above is clearly bounded below by 0. Again, as mentioned at the end of Sect. 2, whether or not Assumption 4 holds, in practice we can still use our approach to calculate bounds. We solve (IB) with the approximating cone  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  defined in Sect. 4, where  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is the second-order cone, and obtain  $v_{\text{IB}}^* = 1794.0$ , which closes the gap significantly. The first-stage allocations given by the affine policy and our approach, respectively, are

$$\begin{aligned} x_{\text{Aff}}^* &\approx (9.097, 11.246, 9.516, 8.320, 10.384, 9.493, 10.211, 12.316), \\ x_{\text{IB}}^* &\approx (0.269, 16.447, 15.328, 0.091, 18.124, 0.375, 9.951, 19.934). \end{aligned}$$

Letting other data remain the same, we also ran tests on a budget uncertainty set  $\Xi := \{\xi : 0 \leq \xi \leq \hat{\xi} \mathbf{1}, \mathbf{1}^T \xi \leq \Gamma\}$ , where  $\hat{\xi} = 20$  and  $\Gamma = 20\sqrt{N}$ , which is consistent with [11]. We found that, in this case, our method did not perform better than the affine policy.

## 5.4 Randomly generated instances

Finally, we used the same method presented in [28] to generate random instances of (RLP) with  $(k, m, n_1, n_2) = (17, 16, 3, 5)$ ,  $\mathcal{X} = \mathbb{R}^{n_1}$ ,  $\mathcal{U}$  equal to the unit ball, and  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  equal to the second-order cone. Specifically, the instances are generated as follows:

(i) the elements of  $A$  and  $B$  are independently and uniformly sampled in  $[-5, 5]$ ; (ii) the rows of  $F$  are uniformly sampled in  $[-5, 5]$  such that each row is in  $-\widehat{\mathcal{U}}^* = -\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  guaranteeing  $Fu \leq 0$  for all  $u \in \mathcal{U}$ ; and (iii) a random vector  $\mu \in \mathbb{R}^m$  is repeatedly generated according to the uniform distribution on  $[0, 1]^m$  until  $c := A^T \mu \geq 0$  and  $d := B^T \mu \geq 0$ . Note that, by definition,  $\mu \in \mathcal{W}$ .

Clearly Assumption 1 is satisfied. In addition, we can see that Assumption 2 is true as follows. Consider  $x = 0$  and set  $y(\cdot)$  to be the zero map, i.e.,  $y(u) = 0$  for all  $u \in \mathcal{U}$ . Then  $Ax + By(u) \geq Fu$  for all  $u$  if and only if  $0 \geq Fu$  for all  $u$ , which has been guaranteed by construction. Finally, Assumption 3 holds due to the following chain, where  $\pi(x)$  is defined as at the beginning of Sect. 2:

$$\begin{aligned} c^T x + \pi(x) &= c^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} \max_{w \in \mathcal{W}} (Fu - Ax)^T w \\ &\geq c^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} (Fu - Ax)^T \mu = c^T x - (Ax)^T \mu + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} (Fu)^T \mu \\ &= (c - A^T \mu)^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} (Fu)^T \mu = 0^T x + \max_{u \in \mathcal{U}} (Fu)^T \mu \\ &> -\infty. \end{aligned}$$

We do not know if Assumption 4 necessarily holds for this construction, but as mentioned at the end of Sect. 2, our approximations still hold even if Assumption 4 does not hold.

For 1000 generated instances, we computed  $v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ , the lower bound  $v_{\text{LB}}^*$  from the sampling procedure of the Introduction, and our bound  $v_{\text{IB}}^*$  using the approximating cone  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  defined in Sect. 4, where  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}$  is the second-order cone. Of all 1000 instances, 971 have  $v_{\text{LB}}^* < v_{\text{IB}}^* = v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ , while the remaining 29 have  $v_{\text{LB}}^* < v_{\text{IB}}^* < v_{\text{Aff}}^*$ . For those 29 instances with a positive gap, the average relative gap closed is 20.2%, where

$$\text{relative gap closed} := \frac{v_{\text{Aff}}^* - v_{\text{IB}}^*}{v_{\text{Aff}}^* - v_{\text{LB}}^*} \times 100\%.$$

## 5.5 Computational details

Table 2 illustrates some computational details of the three numerical examples in Sects. 5.2–5.4. The statistics on the sizes of the conic programs are reported by Mosek. We list the number of scalar variables (*scalars*), the number of second-order cones (*cones*), the number of positive semidefinite matrices along with their size (*matrices (size)*), and the number of linear constraints (*constraints*) in Table 2. We also report the computation time in the last column. Note that all the 1000 instances in Sect. 5.4 have the same problem size and the computation time is the average of all the instances.

## 6 Future directions

In this paper, we have provided a new perspective on the two-stage problem (RLP). It would be interesting to study tighter inner approximations  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$

**Table 2** Illustration of the sizes of problems and the computation times for the examples as reported by Mosek

Example	Scalars	Cones	Matrices (size)	Constraints	Time (s)
Section 5.2	603	0	1 ( $13 \times 13$ )	448	0.23
Section 5.3	14,861	65	1 ( $73 \times 73$ )	12,210	35.00
Section 5.4	2741	17	1 ( $33 \times 33$ )	1870	0.73

of  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}} \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$  or to pursue other classes of problems, such as the one described in Sect. 5.1, for which our approach allows one to establish the tractability of (RLP). A significant open question for our approach—one which we have not been able to resolve—is whether the copositive approach corresponds to enforcing a particular class of policies  $y(\cdot)$ . For example, the paper [13] solves (RLP) by employing polynomial policies, but the form of our “copositive policies” is unclear even though we have proven they are rich enough to solve (RLP). A related question is how to extract a specific policy  $y(\cdot)$  from the solution of the approximation (IB).

**Acknowledgements** The authors would like to thank Qihang Lin for many helpful discussions regarding the affine policy at the beginning of the project and Erick Delage and Amir Ardestani-Jaafari for thoughtful discussions, for relaying the specific parameters of the instance presented in Sect. 5.2, and for pointing out an error in one of our codes. The authors are sincerely grateful to two anonymous referees for their comments and insights that have greatly improved the paper.

## Appendix

### Proof of Lemma 2

*Proof* Any feasible  $y(\xi)$  satisfies

$$\begin{aligned}
 y(\xi)_s &\geq \max\{\xi_s, 1 - \xi_s\} + y(\xi)_{s-1} \\
 &\geq \max\{\xi_s, 1 - \xi_s\} + \max\{\xi_{s-1}, 1 - \xi_{s-1}\} + y(\xi)_{s-2} \\
 &\geq \cdots \geq \sum_{i=1}^s \max\{\xi_i, 1 - \xi_i\}
 \end{aligned}$$

Hence, applying this inequality at an optimal  $y(\cdot)$ , it follows that

$$v_{\text{RLP},2}^* \geq \max_{\xi \in \Xi_2} \sum_{i=1}^s \max\{\xi_i, 1 - \xi_i\}.$$

Under the change of variables  $\mu := 2\xi - \mathbb{1}_s$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned}
v_{\text{RLP},2}^* &\geq \max_{\xi \in \Xi_2} \sum_{i=1}^s \max\{\xi_i, 1 - \xi_i\} = \max_{\|\mu\| \leq 1} \sum_{i=1}^s \frac{1}{2} \max\{1 + \mu_i, 1 - \mu_i\} \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \max_{\|\mu\| \leq 1} \sum_{i=1}^s (1 + |\mu_i|) = \frac{1}{2} \left( s + \max_{\|\mu\| \leq 1} \|\mu\|_1 \right) = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s),
\end{aligned}$$

where the last equality follows from the fact that the largest 1-norm over the Euclidean unit ball is  $\sqrt{s}$ . Moreover, one can check that the specific, sequentially defined mapping

$$\begin{aligned}
y(\xi)_1 &:= \max\{\xi_1, 1 - \xi_1\} \\
y(\xi)_2 &:= \max\{\xi_2, 1 - \xi_2\} + y(\xi)_1 \\
&\vdots \\
y(\xi)_s &:= \max\{\xi_s, 1 - \xi_s\} + y(\xi)_{s-1}
\end{aligned}$$

is feasible with objective value  $\frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ . So  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* \leq \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ , and this completes the argument that  $v_{\text{RLP},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ .  $\square$

### Proof of Proposition 6

The proof of Proposition 6 requires the following lemma.

**Lemma 3** *If a symmetric matrix  $V$  is positive semidefinite on the null space of the rectangular matrix  $E$  (that is,  $z \in \text{Null}(E) \Rightarrow z^T V z \geq 0$ ), then there exists  $\mu > 0$  such that  $\rho I + V + \mu E^T E > 0$ .*

*Proof* We prove the contrapositive. Suppose  $\rho I + V + \mu E^T E$  is not positive definite for all  $\mu > 0$ . In particular, there exists a sequence of vectors  $\{z_\ell\}$  such that

$$z_\ell^T (\rho I + V + \ell E^T E) z_\ell \leq 0, \quad \|z_\ell\| = 1.$$

Since  $\{z_\ell\}$  is bounded, there exists a limit point  $\bar{z}$  such that

$$z_\ell^T \left( \frac{1}{\ell} (\rho I + V) + E^T E \right) z_\ell \leq 0 \Rightarrow \bar{z}^T E^T E \bar{z} = \|E \bar{z}\|^2 \leq 0 \Leftrightarrow \bar{z} \in \text{Null}(E).$$

Furthermore,

$$\begin{aligned}
z_\ell^T (\rho I + V) z_\ell &\leq -\ell z_\ell^T E^T E z_\ell = -\ell \|E z_\ell\|^2 \leq 0 \Rightarrow \bar{z}^T (\rho I + V) \bar{z} \leq 0 \\
&\Leftrightarrow \bar{z}^T V \bar{z} \leq -\rho \|\bar{z}\|^2 < 0.
\end{aligned}$$

Thus,  $V$  is not positive semidefinite on  $\text{Null}(E)$ .  $\square$

*Proof of Proposition 6* For fixed  $\rho > 0$ , let us construct the claimed feasible solution. Set

$$\lambda = v_{\text{RLP},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s), \quad \alpha = 0, \quad \tau = \frac{1}{4}\sqrt{s}, \quad S_{21} = 0,$$

and

$$S_{22} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s \left( f_{2i} f_{2i-1}^T + f_{2i-1} f_{2i}^T \right) \geq 0,$$

where  $f_j$  denotes the  $j$ -th standard basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^m = \mathbb{R}^{2s}$ . Note that clearly  $\alpha \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$  and  $\text{Rows}(S_{21}) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$ . Also forcing  $v = \mu \mathbb{1}_k$  for a single scalar variable  $\mu$ , where  $\mathbb{1}_k$  is the all-ones vector of size  $k = s + 1$ , the feasibility constraints of (15) simplify further to

$$\rho I + \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2}(s + \sqrt{s})e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{4}\sqrt{s}J & -\frac{1}{2}F^T \\ -\frac{1}{2}F & -S_{22} \end{pmatrix} + \mu E^T E \geq 0, \quad (19)$$

where  $e_1 \in \mathbb{R}^k = \mathbb{R}^{s+1}$  is the first standard basis vector. For compactness, we write

$$V := \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2}(s + \sqrt{s})e_1 e_1^T - \frac{1}{4}\sqrt{s}J & -\frac{1}{2}F^T \\ -\frac{1}{2}F & -S_{22} \end{pmatrix} \quad (20)$$

so that (19) reads  $\rho I + V + \mu E^T E \geq 0$ .

We next show that the matrix  $V$  is positive semidefinite on  $\text{Null}(E)$ . Recall that  $E \in \mathbb{R}^{n_2 \times (k+m)} = \mathbb{R}^{s \times (3s+1)}$ . For notational convenience, we partition any  $z \in \mathbb{R}^{k+m}$  into  $z = \begin{pmatrix} u \\ w \end{pmatrix}$  with  $u \in \mathbb{R}^k = \mathbb{R}^{s+1}$  and  $w \in \mathbb{R}^m = \mathbb{R}^{2s}$ . Then, from the definition of  $E$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} z = \begin{pmatrix} u \\ w \end{pmatrix} \in \text{Null}(E) &\iff \left\{ \begin{array}{l} w_1 + w_2 = w_3 + w_4 \\ w_3 + w_4 = w_5 + w_6 \\ \vdots \\ w_{2s-3} + w_{2s-2} = w_{2s-1} + w_{2s} \\ w_{2s-1} + w_{2s} = u_1 \end{array} \right\} \\ &\iff w_{2i-1} = u_1 - w_{2i} \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, s. \end{aligned}$$

So, taking into account the definition (20) of  $V$ ,

$$4z^T V z = 4 \begin{pmatrix} u \\ w \end{pmatrix}^T V \begin{pmatrix} u \\ w \end{pmatrix} = u^T (2(s + \sqrt{s})e_1 e_1^T - \sqrt{s}J) u - 4w^T F u - 4w^T S_{22} w,$$

which breaks into the three summands, and we will simplify each one by one. First,

$$\begin{aligned} u^T (2(s + \sqrt{s})e_1 e_1^T - \sqrt{s}J) u &= 2(s + \sqrt{s})u_1^2 - \sqrt{s}u_1^2 + \sqrt{s} \sum_{j=2}^{s+1} u_j^2 \\ &= 2s u_1^2 + \sqrt{s} u^T u. \end{aligned}$$

Second,

$$\begin{aligned}
 -4w^T Fu &= -4 \sum_{j=1}^{2s} w_j [Fu]_j = -4 \sum_{i=1}^s (w_{2i-1} [Fu]_{2i-1} + w_{2i} [Fu]_{2i}) \\
 &= -2 \sum_{i=1}^s (w_{2i-1} (u_1 + u_{i+1}) + w_{2i} (u_1 - u_{i+1})) \\
 &= -2 \sum_{i=1}^s ((w_{2i-1} + w_{2i}) u_1 + u_{i+1} (w_{2i-1} - w_{2i})) \\
 &= -2 \sum_{i=1}^s (u_1^2 + u_{i+1} (w_{2i-1} - w_{2i})) \\
 &= -2s u_1^2 - 2 \sum_{i=1}^s u_{i+1} (w_{2i-1} - w_{2i}) \\
 &= -2s u_1^2 + 2 \sum_{i=1}^s u_{i+1} (w_{2i} - w_{2i-1}) \\
 &= -2s u_1^2 + 2 \sum_{i=1}^s u_{i+1} (2w_{2i} - u_1).
 \end{aligned}$$

Finally,

$$\begin{aligned}
 -4w^T S_{22} w &= -4w^T \left( \frac{1}{2\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s (f_{2i} f_{2i-1}^T + f_{2i-1} f_{2i}^T) \right) w \\
 &= -\frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s w_{2i-1} w_{2i} = -\frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s (u_1 - w_{2i}) w_{2i}.
 \end{aligned}$$

Combining the three summands, we have as desired

$$\begin{aligned}
 4z^T Vz &= \left( 2s u_1^2 + \sqrt{s} u^T u \right) + \left( -2s u_1^2 + 2 \sum_{i=1}^s u_{i+1} (2w_{2i} - u_1) \right) \\
 &\quad + \left( -\frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s (u_1 - w_{2i}) w_{2i} \right) \\
 &= \sqrt{s} u^T u + 2 \sum_{i=1}^s u_{i+1} (2w_{2i} - u_1) - \frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} \sum_{i=1}^s (u_1 - w_{2i}) w_{2i} \\
 &= \sum_{i=1}^s \left( \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} u_1^2 + \sqrt{s} u_{i+1}^2 + 2 u_{i+1} (2w_{2i} - u_1) - \frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} (u_1 - w_{2i}) w_{2i} \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
&= \sum_{i=1}^s \left( \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} u_1^2 - 2u_1 u_{i+1} - \frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} u_1 w_{2i} + \sqrt{s} u_{i+1}^2 + 4u_{i+1} w_{2i} + \frac{4}{\sqrt{s}} w_{2i}^2 \right) \\
&= \sum_{i=1}^s \left( -(s)^{-1/4} u_1 + (s)^{1/4} u_{i+1} + 2(s)^{-1/4} w_{2i} \right)^2 \\
&\geq 0.
\end{aligned}$$

Given that  $\rho$ ,  $V$ , and  $E$  are defined as above. By Lemma 3,  $\mu$  can be chosen so that (19) is indeed satisfied.  $\square$

### Proof of Proposition 7

*Proof* By construction,  $Z$  is positive semidefinite, and one can argue in a straightforward manner that

$$Z_{11} = \text{Diag}(1, \frac{1}{s}, \dots, \frac{1}{s}), \quad Z_{22} = \frac{1}{4} \left( I + \mathbb{1}_m \mathbb{1}_m^T - \sum_{i=1}^s (f_{2i} f_{2i-1}^T + f_{2i-1} f_{2i}^T) \right),$$

and

$$Z_{21} = \frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then  $Z$  clearly satisfies  $g_1 g_1^T \bullet Z = 1$ ,  $Z_{11} e_1 \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$ ,  $J \bullet Z_{11} \geq 0$ ,  $Z_{22} \geq 0$ , and  $\text{Rows}(Z_{21}) \in \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$ . Furthermore, the constraint  $I \bullet Z \leq r$  is easily satisfied for sufficiently large  $r$ . To check the constraint  $\text{diag}(E Z E^T) = 0$ , it suffices to verify  $E Z = 0$ , which amounts to two equations. First,

$$0 = E \begin{pmatrix} 2e_1 \\ \mathbb{1}_m \end{pmatrix} = -2de_1^T e_1 + B^T \mathbb{1}_m = -2d + 2d = 0,$$

and second, for each  $i = 1, \dots, s$ ,

$$\begin{aligned}
0 &= E \begin{pmatrix} \frac{2}{\sqrt{s}} e_{i+1} \\ f_{2i-1} - f_{2i} \end{pmatrix} = -\frac{2}{\sqrt{s}} de_1^T e_{i+1} \\
&\quad + B^T (f_{2i-1} - f_{2i}) = 0 + B^T f_{2i-1} - B^T f_{2i} = 0.
\end{aligned}$$



So the proposed  $Z$  is feasible. Finally, it is clear that the corresponding objective value is  $F \bullet Z_{21} = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ . So  $Z$  is indeed optimal.  $\square$

### Proof of Proposition 8

*Proof* The inclusion  $\Xi_1 \subseteq \Xi_2$  implies  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \subseteq \widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2$  and  $\text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s}) \subseteq \text{CPP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$ . Hence,  $\text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s}) \supseteq \text{COP}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$ . Moreover, it is not difficult to see that the construction of  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$  introduced at the end of Sect. 4 for the polyhedral cone  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1$  satisfies  $\text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s}) \supseteq \text{IB}(\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_2 \times \mathbb{R}_+^{2s})$ . Thus, we conclude  $v_{\text{IB},1}^* \leq v_{\text{IB},2}^* = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{s} + s)$ .

We finally show  $v_{\text{IB},1}^* \geq v_{\text{IB},2}^*$ . Based on the definition of  $\widehat{\mathcal{U}}_1$  using the matrix  $P$ , similar to (16) the corresponding dual problem is

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{IB},1}^* = \max \quad & F \bullet Z_{21} \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \text{diag}(EZE^T) = 0, \quad I \bullet Z \leq r \\ & PZ_{11}e_1 \geq 0, \quad PZ_{11}P^T \geq 0, \quad Z_{22} \geq 0, \quad PZ_{21}^T \geq 0 \\ & Z \succeq 0, \quad g_1g_1^T \bullet Z = 1. \end{aligned} \quad (21)$$

To complete the proof, we claim that the specific  $Z$  detailed in the previous subsection is also feasible for (21). It remains to show that  $PZ_{11}e_1 \geq 0$ ,  $PZ_{11}P^T \geq 0$ , and  $PZ_{21}^T \geq 0$ .

Recall that  $Z_{11} = \text{Diag}(1, \frac{1}{s}, \dots, \frac{1}{s})$  and every row of  $P$  has the form  $(1, \pm 1, \dots, \pm 1)$ . Clearly, we have  $PZ_{11}e_1 \geq 0$ . Moreover, each entry of  $PZ_{11}P^T$  can be expressed as  $(\frac{1}{\alpha})^T Z_{11}(\frac{1}{\beta})$  for some  $\alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{R}^s$  each of the form  $(\pm 1, \dots, \pm 1)$ . We have

$$(\frac{1}{\alpha})^T Z_{11}(\frac{1}{\beta}) = 1 + \frac{1}{s} \cdot \alpha^T \beta \geq 1 + \frac{1}{s}(-s) \geq 0.$$

So indeed  $PZ_{11}P^T \geq 0$ . To check  $PZ_{21}^T \geq 0$ , recall also that every column of  $Z_{21}^T$  has the form  $\frac{1}{2}(e_1 \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}}e_{i+1})$  for  $i = 1, \dots, s$ , where  $e_\bullet$  is a standard basis vector in  $\mathbb{R}^k = \mathbb{R}^{s+1}$ . Then each entry of  $2PZ_{21}^T$  can be expressed as

$$(\frac{1}{\alpha})^T e_1 \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}}(\frac{1}{\alpha})^T e_{i+1} \geq 1 - \frac{1}{\sqrt{s}} > 0.$$

So  $PZ_{21}^T \geq 0$ , as desired.  $\square$

### References

1. Anstreicher, K.M.: Semidefinite programming versus the reformulation-linearization technique for nonconvex quadratically constrained quadratic programming. *J. Glob. Optim.* **43**(2–3), 471–484 (2009)
2. Ardestani-Jaafari, A., Delage, E.: The value of flexibility in robust location-transportation problem. *Les Cahiers du GERAD G-2014-83*, GERAD, HEC Montréal (2014)
3. Ardestani-Jaafari, A., Delage, E.: Linearized robust counterparts of two-stage robust optimization problem with applications in operations management. Manuscript, HEC Montreal (2016)

4. Ardestani-Jaafari, A., Delage, E.: Robust optimization of sums of piecewise linear functions with application to inventory problems. *Oper. Res.* **64**(2), 474–494 (2016)
5. Atamtürk, A., Zhang, M.: Two-stage robust network flow and design under demand uncertainty. *Oper. Res.* **55**(4), 662–673 (2007)
6. Ben-Tal, A., Boaz, G., Shimrit, S.: Robust multi-echelon multi-period inventory control. *Eur. J. Oper. Res.* **199**(3), 922–935 (2009)
7. Ben-Tal, A., Do Chung, B., Mandala, S.R., Yao, T.: Robust optimization for emergency logistics planning: risk mitigation in humanitarian relief supply chains. *Transp. Res. Part B: Methodol.* **45**(8), 1177–1189 (2011)
8. Ben-Tal, A., Golany, B., Nemirovski, A., Vial, J.-P.: Retailer-supplier flexible commitments contracts: a robust optimization approach. *Manuf. Serv. Oper. Manag.* **7**(3), 248–271 (2005)
9. Ben-Tal, A., Goryashko, A., Guslitzer, E., Nemirovski, A.: Adjustable robust solutions of uncertain linear programs. *Math. Program. Ser. A* **99**, 351–376 (2004)
10. Ben-Tal, A., Nemirovski, A.: Robust solutions of uncertain linear programs. *Oper. Res. Lett.* **25**(1), 1–14 (1999)
11. Bertsimas, D., de Ruiter, F.J.: Duality in two-stage adaptive linear optimization: faster computation and stronger bounds. *INFORMS J. Comput.* **28**(3), 500–511 (2016)
12. Bertsimas, D., Goyal, V., Lu, P.Y.: A tight characterization of the performance of static solutions in two-stage adjustable robust linear optimization. *Math. Program. Ser. A* **150**(2), 281–319 (2014)
13. Bertsimas, D., Iancu, D.A., Parrilo, P.A.: A hierarchy of near-optimal policies for multistage adaptive optimization. *IEEE Trans. Autom. Control* **56**(12), 2809–2824 (2011)
14. Bertsimas, D., Litvinov, E., Sun, X.A., Zhao, J., Zheng, T.: Adaptive robust optimization for the security constrained unit commitment problem. *IEEE Trans. Power Syst.* **28**(1), 52–63 (2013)
15. Burer, S.: On the copositive representation of binary and continuous nonconvex quadratic programs. *Math. Program. Ser. A* **120**(2), 479–495 (2009)
16. Burer, S.: Copositive programming. In: Anjos, M., Lasserre, J. (eds.) *Handbook of Semidefinite, Cone and Polynomial Optimization: Theory, Algorithms, Software and Applications*. International Series in Operational Research and Management Science, pp. 201–218. Springer, Berlin (2011)
17. Burer, S.: A gentle, geometric introduction to copositive optimization. *Math. Program.* **151**(1), 89–116 (2015)
18. Burer, S., Dong, H.: Representing quadratically constrained quadratic programs as generalized copositive programs. *Oper. Res. Lett.* **40**, 203–206 (2012)
19. Chang, Y., Rao, S., Tawarmalani, M.: Robust validation of network designs under uncertain demands and failures. In: 14th USENIX Symposium on Networked Systems Design and Implementation (NSDI 17), pp. 347–362, Boston, MA (2017). USENIX Association
20. Chen, X., Zhang, Y.: Uncertain linear programs: extended affinely adjustable robust counterparts. *Oper. Res.* **57**(6), 1469–1482 (2009)
21. Delage, E., Iancu, D.A.: Robust Multistage Decision Making, chap. 2, pp. 20–46. *INFORMS* (2015)
22. Doulabi, S.H.H., Jaillet, P., Pesant, G., Rousseau, L.-M.: Exploiting the structure of two-stage robust optimization models with integer adversarial variables. Manuscript, MIT (2016)
23. Eichfelder, G., Jahn, J.: Set-semidefinite optimization. *J. Convex Anal.* **15**, 767–801 (2008)
24. Fonseca, R.J., Rustem, B.: International portfolio management with affine policies. *Eur. J. Oper. Res.* **223**(1), 177–187 (2012)
25. Gabrel, V., Lacroix, M., Murat, C., Remli, N.: Robust location transportation problems under uncertain demands. *Discrete Appl. Math.* **164**, 100–111 (2014)
26. Gorissen, B.L., Den Hertog, D.: Robust counterparts of inequalities containing sums of maxima of linear functions. *Eur. J. Oper. Res.* **227**(1), 30–43 (2013)
27. Grötschel, M., Lovász, L., Schrijver, A.: The ellipsoid method and its consequences in combinatorial optimization. *Combinatorica* **1**(2), 169–197 (1981)
28. Hadjiyiannis, M.J., Goulart, P.J., Kuhn, D.: A scenario approach for estimating the suboptimality of linear decision rules in two-stage robust optimization. In: 50th IEEE Conference on Decision and Control and European Control Conference (CDC-ECC), Orlando, FL, USA, Dec 12–15 (2011)
29. Hanasusanto, G.A., Kuhn, D.: Conic programming reformulations of two-stage distributionally robust linear programs over wasserstein balls. arXiv preprint [arXiv:1609.07505](https://arxiv.org/abs/1609.07505) (2016)
30. Konno, H.: A cutting plane algorithm for solving bilinear programs. *Math. Program.* **11**, 14–27 (1976)
31. Lofberg, J.: Yalmip: a toolbox for modeling and optimization in matlab. In: *Computer Aided Control Systems Design, 2004 IEEE International Symposium on*, pp. 284–289. IEEE (2004)

32. MOSEK ApS: The MOSEK Optimization toolbox for MATLAB Manual. Version 8.0 (Revision 28). <https://docs.mosek.com/8.0/toolbox/index.html> (2017)
33. Pólik, I., Terlaky, T.: A survey of the S-lemma. *SIAM Rev.* **49**(3), 371–418 (2007)
34. Poss, M., Raack, C.: Affine recourse for the robust network design problem: between static and dynamic routing. *Networks* **61**(2), 180–198 (2013)
35. Schrijver, A.: Theory of linear and integer programming. Wiley-Interscience Series in Discrete Mathematics. Wiley, Chichester (1986). A Wiley-Interscience Publication
36. Sherali, H.D., Adams, W.P.: A Reformulation-linearization Technique for Solving Discrete and Continuous Nonconvex Problems, vol. 31. Springer, Berlin (2013)
37. Solyalı, O., Cordeau, J.-F., Laporte, G.: The impact of modeling on robust inventory management under demand uncertainty. *Manag. Sci.* **62**(4), 1188–1201 (2016)
38. Wang, Q., Watson, J.P., Guan, Y.: Two-stage robust optimization for  $N_k$  contingency-constrained unit commitment. *IEEE Trans. Power Syst.* **28**, 2366–2375 (2013)
39. Wiesemann, W., Kuhn, D., Rustem, B.: Robust resource allocations in temporal networks. *Math. Program. Ser. A* **135**(1), 437–471 (2011)
40. Zeng, B., Zhao, L.: Solving two-stage robust optimization problems using a column-and-constraint generation method. *Oper. Res. Lett.* **41**, 457–461 (2013)
41. Zhao, L., Zeng, B.: Robust unit commitment problem with demand response and wind energy. In: Power and Energy Society General Meeting, 2012 IEEE, pp. 1–8. IEEE (2012)
42. Zuluaga, L.F., Vera, J., Pea, J.: LMI approximations for cones of positive semidefinite forms. *SIAM J. Optim.* **16**(4), 1076–1091 (2006)