The Texas Traffic Net web page (http://texastrafficnet.org/training.asp) acknowledges on its training page that the National Traffic System (NTS) was established by the ARRL. See the third paragraph below under the subhead "Introduction to Radiogram Traffic."

Texas Traffic Net
www.texastrafficnet.org

Traffic Handler Training

Training, Procedures, Resources, and Forms for the Traffic Handler

or: Traffic Handler, PDF Version, Formatted for Printing - 15 Pages.

Radiogram Training

For the Beginner

The beginner should collect certain information and understand the basics of the traffic system and traffic handling. This document contains everything you need to get started in traffic handling. The first section contains a basic course. The next section contains forms, and the next section contains references like HX-codes and ARL-codes. The last section contains links to more resources on the web. See Contents.

Introduction to Radiogram Traffic

Lesson 1. In the Beginning

Why is the ARRL called a "Relay League?"

The very first Amateur stations were called "Relay Stations," because their first recognized function was to relay message traffic. Back in 1915, when the first issue of QST was printed, they were using low-frequency spark-gap transmitters to send messages in Morse code.

Today, we send traffic using Morse code, voice, and digital modes, with an established message format, in a nationwide network called the National Traffic System (NTS). The NTS is a traffic system established by the ARRL. Many traffic nets are affiliated with NTS, while others are independent. Many independent nets are seamlessly integrated with the NTS, through liaison stations, so that virtually all traffic nets are points of entry and exit for messages, and also provide message relay services to efficiently move traffic from origin to destination.

There are two general types of traffic nets: routine and emergency. The routine nets operate on daily schedules, and handle traffic that is routine (non-emergency), providing a system for maintaining traffic net structure and operator proficiency. They are usually operated in a directed, controlled manner by a Net Control Station (NCS), and are semi-formal. The emergency nets are operated as needed, usually by ARES and/or RACES stations, to meet the communications needs of disaster and emergency response teams. Emergency nets are strictly formal, and only stations participating in the emergency are allowed to check in.

It is an enjoyable and valuable public service to acquire and maintain traffic handling proficiency. Traffic handlers and traffic nets are prepared to handle both routine and emergency traffic, whenever the need arises.

Lesson 2. Preparation

To prepare to handle traffic, we need to obtain some information and forms, do a bit of study, and get organized. Note: The forms mentioned are included in this book.

First, locate and print a net schedule for the nets in your area. For the South-central US, use my online net schedule, or locate or create a custom schedule for your area. Keep your schedule handy and begin listening to the nets. You'll learn a lot just by listening!

Next, study the Traffic System and Net Procedures. The ARRL Operating Manual, Chapter 7, covers this in detail. Also, the official book for NTS and ARES is called the Public Service Communications Manual, or PSCM, and is available online at ARRL. The official NTS Methods and Practices Guidelines (NTS-MPG), also available online, covers traffic